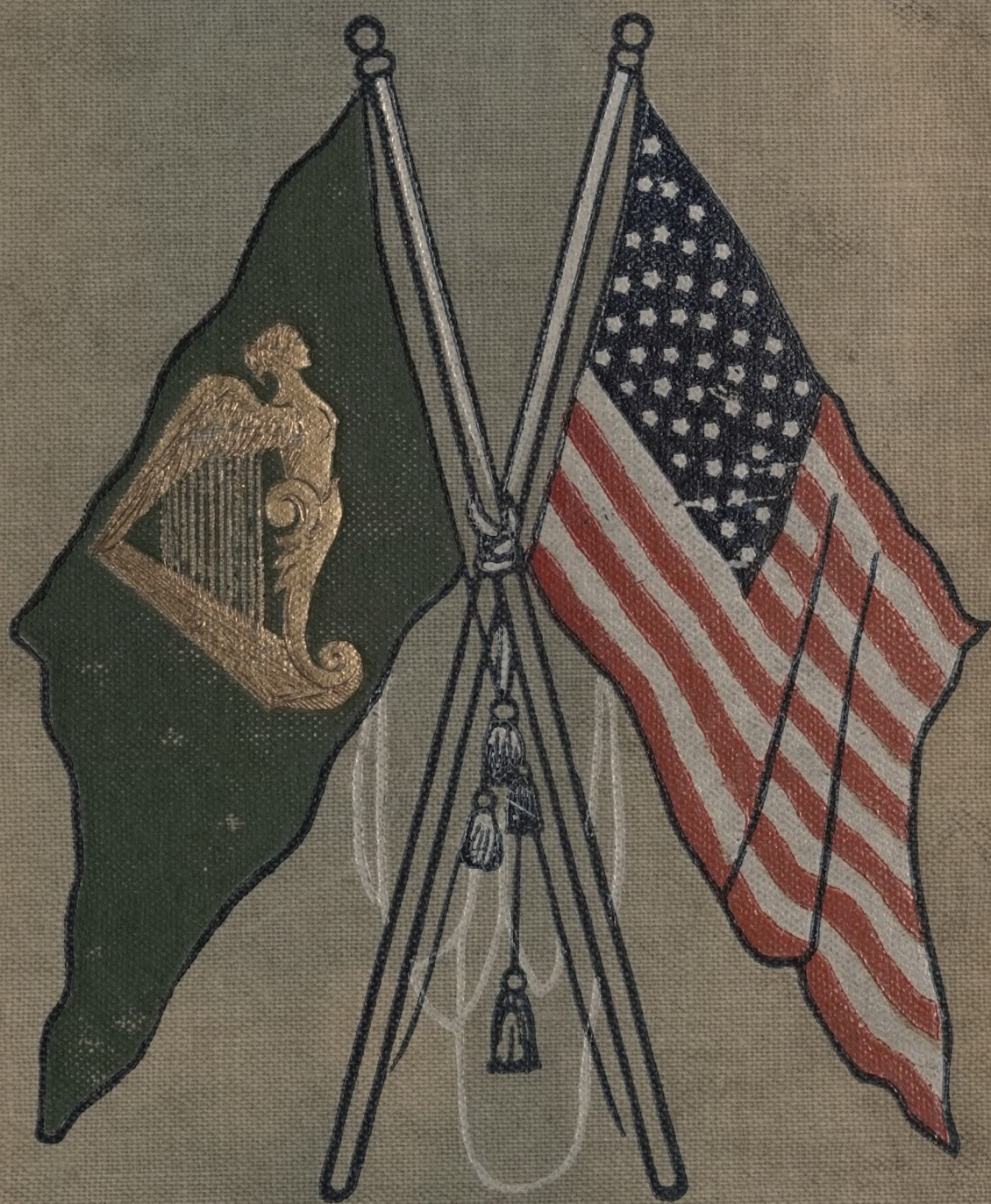


JOHN AND BETTY'S IRISH HISTORY VISIT



MARGARET WILLIAMSON



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JOHN AND BETTY'S
IRISH HISTORY VISIT

THE
HISTORY VISIT BOOKS
BY
MARGARET WILLIAMSON

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JOHN AND BETTY'S ENGLISH HISTORY VISIT
JOHN AND BETTY'S SCOTCH HISTORY VISIT
JOHN AND BETTY'S IRISH HISTORY VISIT

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"I LIKE THE ROUND TOWERS BETTER THAN ANYTHING ELSE IN
IRELAND."—*Page 84.*

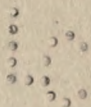
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BY

MARGARET WILLIAMSON

AUTHOR OF "JOHN AND BETTY'S ENGLISH HISTORY VISIT" AND
"JOHN AND BETTY'S SCOTCH HISTORY VISIT"

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS



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JOHN AND BETTY'S IRISH HISTORY VISIT


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FOREWORD

FOR the benefit of those who first become acquainted with John and Betty and their friends during their "Irish History Visit," it may be well to explain how they came to make the trip in the way they did.

Several years earlier, John and Betty's mother was puzzling over the most delightful plan for her children's summer vacation. She then happened to remember certain tedious days when she herself had pored over school histories with their monotonous pages of facts and dates; she had always wished that she could travel in the countries where famous kings and peoples had lived, and fought their long succession of battles. To become familiar with backgrounds, even as they appear to-day, would surely make it vastly easier to remember the whys and wherefores of events.

Suddenly she wondered whether John and Betty would like to pass their summer in traveling, in visiting a country's historic spots and thus getting its story fixed in their minds. John hailed her plan with shouts of approval, and Betty began that very evening to make lists of the places she particularly wanted to see.

Thus it was that John and Betty spent their holidays in England. Their mother being unable to leave home, the children made the journey in charge of friends who saw them safely in care of Mrs. Pitt, a Scotch lady and an old friend, who had long lived in England. With her, and her son and daughter, Philip and Barbara, John and Betty saw London and its vicinity, the Shakespeare country, one or two lovely cathedral towns, Robin Hood's Sherwood Forest, and a glimpse of southern Devonshire.

It was not surprising that they should want to see Scotland, and that another trip should be arranged with Mrs. Pitt, Philip, and Barbara. Mrs. Pitt, of course, enjoyed showing them her native Scotland, and she filled the days so full that another three months flew by. Edinburgh was explored, and other fine old towns; excursions were made through the lakes, along the Caledonian Canal, to castles and quaint towns, and far north to the wild Isle of Skye; they saw Walter Scott's home and the scenes of many of his poems and Waverley novels.

Before the Scotch summer was over, Mrs. Pitt had promised to take her party to Ireland, adding an "Irish History Visit" to the "English" and the "Scotch" trips. Although familiar in many respects, they yet found Ireland

very individual. It is less familiar to tourists, and one feels a bit of an explorer in some distant hamlets of the west country. One hears wonderful tales of Ireland in the days when both England and Scotland were still barbaric; of its good saints and cultured priests, its education, religion, and picturesque civilization. One listens to tales of strange happenings and of unearthly creatures, ghosts, banshees, spirits, and fairies. To the very day on which our party left Ireland, they hoped to spy a *leprehaun*, or fairy cobbler, mending a tiny shoe under a clump of shamrock. The children never saw him, but perhaps you may, if your eyes are very sharp and your attention never flags. For, in Ireland, a fairy is always just around the corner.

MARGARET WILLIAMSON.

WEST NEWTON, MASS.,
January 1, 1914.

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JOHN AND BETTY'S
IRISH HISTORY VISIT

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CHAPTER ONE

THE FIRST DAY IN IRELAND

“When the glass is up to thirty,
Be sure the weather will be dirty.
When the glass is high, oh, very!
There'll be rain in Cork and Kerry.
When the glass is low, O Lork!
There'll be rain in Kerry and Cork!”

OF course every one expected that it would rain. The gray, chilly morning was no surprise. When the great ocean liner stopped just outside Queenstown Harbor, the sea was running so high as to tumble the tender about in an alarming manner; and when the passengers stood upon its slippery deck, surrounded by piles of trunks, they could see little of Ireland. A heavy mist hung low over high bluffs topped by green-checkered fields and tiny white farmhouses.

John jerked his cap down over his eyes and Betty was holding on her hat with both hands.

“I keep seeing something bright yellow, all

up and down the cliffs," she said. "What is it? Oh, perhaps it's gorse! Do you think so?"

"Yes, probably. I've heard it's very beautiful in the early spring. See, what masses of it there are!" exclaimed Betty's mother.

They went into the stuffy cabin and peered through cloudy window-panes at Spanish Cove, an inner harbor into which Francis Drake ran one of his ships to evade the pursuing Armada.

"Hello! Was that outfit over here, too?" asked John.

They had scarcely time to realize that they were in huge Queenstown Harbor, "capable of sheltering Great Britain's entire navy," when the pier was sighted with the steep town piled behind.

On the pier were women with dark shawls drawn protectingly over their heads and across their mouths; close by were shaggy donkeys hitched to dilapidated carts, and beyond, outside-cars, with their shouting, gesticulating drivers. Betty and her brother had all along been feeling their superior knowledge of foreign affairs, circumstances having kept their mother in America while they had visited both England and Scotland; but neither John nor Betty had ever seen a real jaunting-car, at least not on its native soil.

John wanted to ride on one as soon as they

and their luggage had escaped the custom official, but his mother gently insisted upon taking the waiting train for Cork.

“ You know we must push on to Dublin this afternoon,” she said; “ Mrs. Pitt, Barbara, and Philip hope to find us there when they arrive from England to-night.”

It is only a half-hour's ride to Cork, through pleasant farming country very much like England. The train often skirts the river Lee, near which are country houses, villas, and an occasional castle. Legend says that a lady built the castle at Monkstown at the cost of one groat, accomplishing this by supplying the workmen with food and other necessities which she bought at wholesale. When she balanced her accounts her profit had paid all expenses except fourpence. Thus she pleased her absent lord, who loved economy.

“ Should think he'd have kept on going to war!” chuckled John.

Another castle, called Blackrock, is quite modern, though the spot is claimed to be that from which William Penn set out for America.

Upon leaving the station at Cork they saw more shawled women, donkey-carts, and outside-cars; a few beggars followed them, and barefooted boys tried to sell them newspapers. Ignoring them all, they at last succeeded in pushing their way to a clanging tramcar.

The tram's speed was by no means what might have been expected from the great noise of its gong. Cork is a city, but hardly in the American sense of the word. There no one hurries; all things move in leisurely fashion, except, perhaps, a jaunting-car, here and there, whose driver and passenger boisterously urge the horse to high speed because they love jolting over rough stones and lurching around corners. Every one seems to have time to loiter on the bridges and watch the boats; to stroll along the quays by the Lee; to shop in Patrick Street, or, at least, to examine the contents of its shop windows.

The morning's mist had vanished and the sun shone upon Cork and the hills which encircle it—hills showing the first green of spring. Even the beggars appeared contented in their sunny corners. Everything seemed to smile upon John and Betty, and their mother, speaking those words of Irish welcome, *Céad-míle-fáilte*: a hundred thousand welcomes.

“I wonder what places we go through on our way,” remarked Betty, as they were lunching at the Imperial Hotel.

“I really don't know,” her mother confessed, laughing. “I'm like that person in Jane Barlow's rhyme:

““An' there,” sez I to meself, “we're goin' wherever
we go,

But where we'll be whin we git there, it's never a know I'll know." " "

" Except Dublin," said John; " you know we'll be there at seven o'clock."

" Perhaps; but every one says that Irish trains are horribly uncertain! "

They took an outside-car back to the station, John occupying one of the side seats while Betty and her mother had the other.

" It's so hard to get on! " complained Betty's mother, " and even harder to stay on afterwards. John, do tell him to drive slowly! Goodness! the seat swings, doesn't it? "

Betty and her mother were frantically clinging to the low rail of the driver's seat, but John's bearing was altogether admirable. Scorning to steady himself, he sat bolt upright, with arms folded and an expression of vast satisfaction on his face.

" Should think I'd done it all my life! " he cried. " Say, Mother, isn't it bully? "

" I feel like curling my feet up under me for fear somebody'll grab them," exclaimed Betty.

When they reached the station, John and Betty jumped to the ground, and their mother, groping about for the step, finally managed to get her heel upon it, and so slide down. Thus their first jaunting-car drive ended without mishap.

The railroad from Cork to Dublin runs for many miles between high banks, disappointing travelers who want to see the country. The banks disappear sometimes, however, disclosing green fields, square potato patches, and overgrown hedges, behind which hide white-washed cottages.

“ They’ve only one window and a door,” observed John, as the train hurried past two or three huddled cottages. “ See, Betty, how the doors are cut in two. Folks leave the bottom part closed.”

“ Why? ”

“ Probably to keep out the livestock,” suggested their mother.

“ Do animals go in their houses? ”

“ I should say they did! Saw a pig and a lot of chickens walking out of one just a little way back! ” this from John.

“ That’s true enough. Shall I tell you children the German tourist’s exaggerated account of what he saw come out of a typical hut of the west country, between six and nine o’clock in the morning? It was something like this: three geese, eight goslings, six hens, fifteen chickens, two pigs, two cows, two barefooted girls, one man leading a horse, three small children with school bags, and one woman leading a donkey loaded with peat-baskets.”

“ Mother! I’m sure you made that up! ”



THEY TOOK AN OUTSIDE-CAR BACK TO THE STATION.—*Page 17.*

“ No, indeed; but, of course, it never happens nowadays.”

After stopping at two junctions, Maryborough and Portarlinton, they came to Kildare, where they saw their first round tower among the trees.

“ Oh, I love it; it’s so tall and straight,” said Betty.

It is not known exactly what these towers were used for, because they were built so very long ago. Some people think the Druids used them in a religious way; some believe they were lookouts, or places of refuge in times of war. The Irish have many stories about their being built in a single night by the fairies. There are many round towers in Ireland, and one or two have still the original pointed top, which the one at Kildare has lost.

Here John began to chant dramatically the following verse, found in the guide-book:

“ “ Who killed Kildare? who dared Kildare to kill?
I killed Kildare; and dare kill whom I will.” ”

“ Good for him, whoever he was! ”

A gentleman in their compartment of the train told Betty about St. Brigit, one of Ireland’s many famous saints, who founded a nunnery at Kildare in 484.

“ She was a follower of the great St. Patrick, you know. Here her nuns started an ‘ inextin-

guishable fire,' which was kept burning for eight hundred years. You've heard that Ireland has many holy wells where people go to drink when they are sick? Some people think that good St. Brigit now lives in these wells, helping to cure people, and appearing as 'a very civil little fish, very pleasant, wagging its tail'!"

"Look out of the window, John!" interrupted his mother, hastily consulting her guide-book. "This huge field here—it has 5000 acres—must be what they call the Curragh. It has seen military camps and battles, but now it's a race-course, one of the finest in the whole Kingdom. My, what turf for the horses!"

"When do they race? Could we go?" demanded her son excitedly.

His mother did not know, but perhaps they could find out; they would see.

Soon they began to collect their luggage, for they were nearing Dublin.

"Well," said Betty, walking down the platform, past a long line of outside-cars, "of course, I knew there were jaunting-cars—I've seen one at the Hippodrome in New York—but I didn't think there were so many in Ireland, or—— Oh, there's Barbara! They got here before we did!"

CHAPTER TWO

IN DUBLIN

“The seat of this city is of all sides pleasant, comfortable, and wholesome: if you would traverse hills, they are not far off; if champaign ground, it lieth of all parts; if you be delighted with fresh water, the famous river called the Liffey runneth fast by; if you will take a view of the sea, it is at hand.”

THE first days of their stay at the big house in Stephen's Green were miserably cold and rainy. When Betty read the above passage in an old book, she was inclined to believe that too much was claimed for Dublin; and, especially, she wanted to know what “champaign” meant.

After John and his sister had seen their mother off for England and the Continent, where she was to join friends, there was little for them to do except unpack, chatter with Philip and Barbara, or read. Betty was glad of the opportunity to study some of the books in the library.

“Come here, John,” she once called, brushing a lock of hair from her face. “You must listen to some of these things I've found out.

‘First of all, let me tell you’,—that’s how Miss Hall always begins at school, you know—that Dublin has a Gaelic name, the name the real Irish people gave it. They used to spell it D-u-b-h-l-i-n-n, and it means ‘the black pool.’ That’s because this city is built over a great big peat bog, like those we saw on the Isle of Skye last summer, John; and peat makes water brown, you know. Perhaps if it’s very peaty, the water would be *almost* black. There was a ford over the Liffey River here, too, but it was so muddy that they threw down a lot of wicker hurdles (What are they? Sticks?); then they called it ‘the town of the hurdle ford.’ There’s another Gaelic name for that. See it? But this was all very, very long ago, John, even before St. Patrick came.”

Betty was turning to another page, marked by her finger, when John demanded, “Yes, but how long ago? Is Dublin old—awfully old—like London and Edinburgh?”

“I just guess it is! The book says it was here in 150 A. D., and this is how they know it. ‘Conn of the Hundred Battles’ had been beaten by some other king and——”

“Gee! a hundred!”

Overlooking the interruption, Betty went triumphantly on. “‘King Conn of the Hundred Battles,’” she repeated, “had to share Ireland, so he drew a straight line from the At-

lantic Ocean, over on the west, to the High Street, in Dublin; and that's how we can tell there was a Dublin then."

"What happened next? Oh, let me see, Betty! You've had the book forever!"

"Brian Boru came next, didn't he?" inquired his sister, handing it over a bit unwillingly.

"Not until those Danes had been here. They kept coming over and grabbing things everywhere, but Brian Boru finally whipped 'em somewhere—at a place called Clontarf, I think. You bet they never came again! They must have been the ones who tied matches to some swallows' tails when they wanted to burn the thatched roofs at Dublin. Wonder how they caught enough!"

"John!" cried prim little Barbara, who had come into the room; "what do you mean? Fancy! Matches weren't invented then. Nobody ever used them till—well, just this minute I forget the date, but we've had it in school."

Betty snatched the book, her eyes snapping. "It *does* say that some early invaders had them," she retorted. "English people never will admit that Ireland had anything before they did! You aren't fair at all, Barbara!"

Their little disagreement was instantly forgotten, however, for Mrs. Pitt entered, wearing her hat and coat and pulling on her gloves.

“It’s going to be a fine afternoon,” she announced jubilantly. “Yes, we’ll go out immediately, before the sun has a chance to vanish again. Fetch me my umbrella, Philip. Hurry, Barbara; you’ll keep us waiting.”

The paths in Stephen’s Green Park were still wet, but the grass and trees showed a dainty, fresh green, babies were out with their nurses, and the ducks in the pretty pools were energetic and cheerful. They crossed the park by the diagonal path and entered Grafton Street, Dublin’s Regent Street, now packed with busy shoppers, outside-cars, private carriages and motor-cars. The long line of fashionable shops at last ends where Grafton Street merges into College Green, the starting place of many tram lines. Just opposite is stately Parliament House, a bank until Home Rule, the Irishman’s dream, shall restore it to its original use. To the right is Trinity College.

“Now, where’ve I bumped into him before? Sure I’ve knocked against a fellow with a forehead like that! Teachers always tell you to be sure and notice his forehead ‘specially. Who—? Oh, I know! It’s ‘old Noll,’ of course! Wrote ‘The Deserted Village,’—old guy back from the wars, and all the rest of the bunch!” John doffed his cap, bowing low before the statue of Oliver Goldsmith, near the

entrance of the college which is now so proud of him.

They went through a broad gateway under which are the familiar college notices and bulletins, and came into a large, graveled court, closed in by gray buildings. The place seemed almost deserted; a professor in a black gown mounted a distant flight of steps; over there rode a student on his bicycle; here one caught sounds of voices from a classroom; in the distance was the rumble of the city streets.

“Trinity College has always played a large part in political affairs,” said Mrs. Pitt; “perhaps because it is situated in the midst of the city. It is altogether different from Oxford and Cambridge, with their quiet rivers and sheltered courts.

“Before Trinity College was founded, a Franciscan monastery stood here,” Mrs. Pitt went on, as they walked towards the Examination Hall; “so, you see, the place has long been famous for learning. It is said that when Queen Elizabeth desired to establish an Irish professorship at Trinity College, Lord Burleigh protested: ‘What! encourage a language more nearly allied to canine barking than to the articulation human!’ Nevertheless, for a long time the Irish tongue was spoken in the classrooms. Queen Elizabeth wished Trinity to be

merely the beginning of an Irish university, but no other colleges have been added from her day to ours."

A solemn caretaker led them about the Examination Hall, with its portraits of college celebrities, Dean Swift, Edmund Burke, and Queen Elizabeth herself among them.

"Yez may think it odd, mum," he said, "but them as sits near the picter o' Queen Elizabeth there has never no success with the examinations at all."

"I do believe that pointed chin of hers, and the funny ruff, and those sharp little eyes would make me forget all I ever knew," reflected Betty.

"Oliver Goldsmith, as a poor boy, is said to have waited on table here," said Mrs. Pitt, standing in the Dining Hall, with its ancient wainscoting, and its quaint wooden pulpit, which the boys call the "Egg Cup."

"What's the 'Egg Cup' for?"

"One of the students always stands there to read a Latin grace before dinner, Betty."

Of course, they saw the famous library, which is two hundred and forty feet long, containing three hundred thousand books, valuable manuscripts and autographs, and the busts of celebrated men.

"There's only one thing that you need to see," said Mrs. Pitt—"the Book of Kells, most



"TRINITY COLLEGE HAS ALWAYS PLAYED A LARGE PART IN
POLITICAL AFFAIRS."—Page 25.

wonderful of all ancient illuminated books. Here it is."

As they bent over the beautiful pages of the open book, one of which the authorities turn each day, she told them that the best of this illuminating was done by the monks who lived between the ninth and twelfth centuries. There were no other books then, for it was before the time of printing; books such as this were so costly that they were only to be found in the libraries of monasteries, of kings, or of great chiefs, and were sometimes even used as kings' ransoms. The design, workmanship, and color of this Book of Kells are unsurpassed; it may have taken a monk several months to paint each one of its pages.

"What's it about?" asked Betty, drawing the green cloth cover back over the glass case.

"It's the four Gospels, written in Latin," replied Mrs. Pitt.

As they retraced their steps towards the gateway, John remarked that he had not noticed any dormitories or lecture-rooms.

"I knew a chap who lived down near Cork," said Philip; "met him two years ago when we went to Ostend, Mother. He said he did all his studying at home, and only came up to Dublin at examination times."

"Cinch! Don't think I'd like it, though.

Rather be with the fellows! Can they do that, Mrs. Pitt,—on the level? ”

“ Yes, Trinity admits non-resident students who are not required to attend lectures; this explains the presence of so few lecture-rooms and dormitories. Now I want my tea, and I remember a nice shop near here.”

While they rested and drank their tea, Mrs. Pitt told them stories of one of the former professors of Trinity, Doctor “ Jacky ” Barrett, a most curious old character.

“ He was a learned Hebrew scholar and so devoted to the College and to his duties there that, it is said, he seldom went outside the gates. On one famous occasion he saw some sheep in a field, and, upon being told what they were, was much excited at seeing ‘ live mutton.’ But what I like best is his habit of prefacing all his remarks with the question, ‘ Do you see me now? ’ A certain Mr. LeFanu, who was a student here seventy-five years ago, gives some delightful anecdotes of Doctor Barrett in a book which I have with me. I’ll read you one little paragraph. This illustrates his miserly habits:

“ ‘ He (Doctor Barrett) dined at Commons; his only other meal was his breakfast, consisting of a penny loaf and a halfpennyworth of milk. Every morning he handed a halfpenny to the old woman who looked after his rooms, and sent her out to buy the milk. One frosty

morning she slipped, fell, and broke her leg. She was taken to a hospital, and for once Barrett ventured beyond the College precincts and went to see her. "Well, Mary," he said to her, "do you see me now, I suppose the jug is broken, but where is the halfpenny? "" ""

Amid the laughter which followed, Mrs. Pitt assured them that they should read that book.

"Mr. LeFanu also describes the 'Charleys,' or city watchmen, of those days," she said. "They wore long, gray coats with capes, low-crowned hats, and were armed with sharp-pointed pikes; the 'Charleys' were usually feeble and old, and the college boys delighted to play tricks on them, to rob them of the rattles they carried, or, when caught asleep, to turn them face to the ground in their sentry-boxes. It was good sport. But we must go if we're to see anything more this afternoon!"

In the center of College Green stands an equestrian statue of King William III. Mrs. Pitt and the others dodged the trams and paused for a moment, looking up at it.

"The Trinity boys tormented the poor king horribly," observed Mrs. Pitt; "he afforded them almost as much enjoyment as the old 'Charleys.' The statue was made by Grinling Gibbons, who did so much wood-carving, you remember, and it was erected in 1701, when this king was in high favor with the political party

just then in power. Once every year there was a parade around the statue; muskets were fired, and there were grand celebrations. The Jacobites, being still faithful to the cause of the Stuart kings, were obliged to retaliate by secret attacks, under cover of darkness. The Trinity boys were most active; they—— My word! That motor almost touched you, Barbara! Take care! ”

“ What did the Trinity fellows do, Mrs. Pitt? ” persisted John, chuckling in anticipation.

“ Well, they pretended to be angry because the statue turns its back to their college. They occasionally daubed it all over with mud, or carried away its sword, or set a second man up behind King William, a man made of straw.”

John was immensely pleased by these stories, and reminded Mrs. Pitt of how the Harvard boys had painted red old John Harvard's statue at Cambridge, Massachusetts.

“ I saw it! ” he cried, “ and it was corking! ” But Betty quite took the wind out of his sails by insisting that it had happened long before John was born.

And so they went on, down a narrow street which led to the southern bank of the river. Little shipping is now seen in this part of the Liffey, and people only frequent the quays when they want a pleasant walk or when they

have business at the dingy shops where second-hand books, prints, and curios are to be found. Both banks of the river are lined with tall houses, often possessing beautiful doorways, which suggest their once aristocratic occupants; the dark river is crossed by picturesque bridges, and the whole view is dominated by the huge dome of the Four Courts, where the King's laws are enforced. To walk there at sunset is delightful.

“This is all famous ground, of course,” said Mrs. Pitt. “You’ve probably guessed as much, Betty. Not far from Parliament Street here, was once Smock Alley, where David Garrick, the great actor, played; such crowds went to his theater during one period of hot weather that a terrible epidemic afterwards raged, the ‘Garrick fever,’ they called it. This next quay, Merchant’s, is the oldest of them all. Here was that first bridge over the river, the one made of hurdles, which I heard Betty talking about this morning. There was a terrible slaughter of the fleeing Norsemen here, those who tried to escape after the battle of Clontarf. For a long time this bridge was the only one across the Liffey; it fell in the fourteenth century because it was overloaded with many houses and shops, just as was old London Bridge.”

Crossing the river by Queen’s Bridge, they made their way through Queen and Blackhall

Streets to the old King's Hospital of Oxmantown, founded by Charles II., and dubbed Bluecoat School by Dubliners.

"Is it one of those schools that they call a hospital?" asked Betty, remembering the Heriot Hospital she had visited in Edinburgh.

"Yes, and the oldest public school in Ireland. This building, in spite of its thick walls and high windows, which give it an ancient appearance, is comparatively new, having been built only about two hundred years ago. The original house stood near by, and it was put to some strange uses. A great Irish general, Tyrconnel, dismissed the boys and turned the school into another kind of hospital for wounded French soldiers from the Jacobite army; once the pupils were sent to the attic while a parliament met on the ground floor."

Mrs. Pitt's ring was answered by a startled servant; the head master soon came, in a shabby black gown and a mortar-board cap with worn edges. He was delighted at the opportunity of showing Americans the old school, and his stout, talkative wife, and rude, forward child were more than pleased to follow on, adding to the master's explanations. It was not often that strangers from a distance were seen within the gloomy walls.

"Oh, yes," said the master's wife effusively, in answer to Betty's question, "they still have

blue coats; yes, indeed, my dear! And they have yellow collars and cuffs, and beautiful brass buttons, just like those they had in King Charles's time. But now the boys only wear the uniforms on Sundays; we couldn't afford them on week-days."

Certainly the few boys they met wore most ordinary clothes, as they went about the high-studded corridors and the dingy, damp classrooms, with their battered forms.

With a gleam of enthusiasm the head master opened the chapel door. "We've a fine painting here," said he; "the 'Resurrection,' behind the altar there. 'Twas done by one of our old boys. We're proud of that. Now here's the dining-hall. King Charles's arms are over the fireplace, and they say that some of the portraits are good; but you can't live on them, as you know, and I've little enough to spend for food!"

They all shuddered a bit at the cheerless room, with its long tables covered with soiled linen; it was a relief to be ushered into an over-furnished drawing-room, where the head master's wife presented each of the ladies with a gilt button with the words: THE KING'S HOSPITAL, OXMANTOWN, 1670. After this she good-naturedly showed them the boys' playground, the only remaining part of old Oxmantown Green.

“ When Little John, one of Robin Hood’s band, came in disguise to Dublin, my husband says he stood near yonder Merchant’s Quay, a good mile away, and shot an arrow which fell here.”

When they were finally in the street again, out of hearing of the lonely schoolmaster and his over-merry wife, John tossed up his cap and, as he recaptured it, cried:

“ What a school! ”

“ Well,” put in Betty, “ when you remember that Little John almost shot it, you ought to feel a good deal happier! ”

CHAPTER THREE

A TRIP TO HOWTH

“ THIS one goes to Dolphin’s Barn,” said Betty. “ What an adorable name! ”

“ Oh, who wants to see old barns and things, Betty? ” cried John. “ I vote for a tram that goes all through the city, everywhere that there are crowds, and motors, and jaunting-cars with their bully jarveys, and—— How’d Clondalkin do, Mrs. Pitt? No? Oh, well, a fellow always has a corking view from a tram, anyhow! ”

Nothing can possibly be as much fun as riding on the top of British tramcars; at least, this was John and Betty’s opinion, and they had had considerable experience. But, standing by the Nelson Pillar, in Sackville Street, Dublin, it is difficult to decide upon the best route for a ride. There are so many trams, going in so many different directions and having such wonderfully fascinating signs — Donnybrook, Ringsend, Sandymount, Leixlip. How could people direct from the United States know which to select?

Usually Mrs. Pitt chose the tram for them, however. One day she led them to that marked

Clontarf and Howth, which at first took them through the city, as John had wished, giving them glimpses into the second-story windows of shops and a view of the hurrying people about Amiens Street railway station, where once stood the birthplace of the Irish novelist, Lever. The tram crossed a canal and made its way through long streets of ugly workmen's houses, which before long gave place to the villas and big bathing establishments bordering the bay. There were occasional wide gateways, too, with grass-grown drives beyond. Dublin gentlemen in former times built country houses here, the one belonging to Lord Charlemont having been famous for its pillars, poplin hangings, long mirrors, and inlaid floors.

There are still green fields and slopes at Clontarf, where, as Mrs. Pitt reminded them, the great battle and defeat of the Danes took place in 1014.

“ They fought all along the route we have come,” she told them, “ from Clontarf as far into the present city as Sackville Street itself. The Irish had been encamped where Phoenix Park now is, but the Danes came ashore from their huge ships, with the carved prows, which had boldly sailed straight into Dublin Bay. The Danes wore steel armor and bright plumes, and carried swords and spears; above their heads floated the flag made for their leader,



“THEY FOUGHT ALL ALONG THE ROUTE FROM CLONTARF AS FAR INTO THE PRESENT CITY AS SACKVILLE STREET.”—Page 36.

Earl Sigurd, by his witch-mother, who had cunningly sewed upon it a huge black raven, with wings which flapped in the wind. 'Take it, my son, into all thy battles,' she had said, 'and it will always bring to thee vengeance and victory, but do not bear it thyself, for doom will ever fall on him who holds it.' The Irish hosts, led by their aged king, Brian Boru, and his son, Murrough, had no fearful black banners or steel weapons, and armor was unknown to them."

"Tough hole for Brian, wasn't it? Did you say he licked 'em?" asked John eagerly.

"Yes, and the Danes' power in Ireland was broken. In this great battle twenty thousand men fought on each side. The defeated Danes tried to reach their ships, but were pursued even into the waves by the triumphant Irish. Their victory, however, was darkened by the death of many of the Irish leaders. Ireland seems to have been always unfortunate. Even the poet Ossian, in ancient times, wrote that his countrymen 'went forth to the war, but they always fell.' Brian's grandson, a mere boy, was found dead with his hands clutching the hair of a tall Dane; Murrough only lived until the next morning, and even Brian, the aged king, was killed at the door of his tent by Broder, the Viking. Brian Boru had been a brave, great king, and his death was worthy of a sol-

dier. It was a great Irish victory, but before it was won the Danes had sadly devastated the country. An old tradition says that the only animals left in Ireland after the battle of Clontarf were hens and weasels. When cocks crow in the morning country people will sometimes say: 'It is for Denmark they are crowing. Crowing they are to be back in Denmark!''

"What about the fellow who couldn't touch the flag?" demanded John.

"Sigurd? Well, he heeded his mother's mysterious warning as long as he could, but the moment came when he had to carry it himself. Murrough immediately attacked him, a sword in either hand; with one weapon he knocked off Sigurd's helmet, with the other he pierced his body."

Betty had been so interested in listening to Mrs. Pitt's account of the battle that she almost lost her balance as the tram swung around a corner. They were about to cross the Isthmus of Sutton, and the high hill of Howth loomed ahead.

"That would be a ducky hill to climb," remarked Barbara. "It has pretty woods at the bottom and rocks on top. I like those red rocks, don't you?"

They might have taken the railroad which now carries the tourist up this hill, guarding the entrance to Dublin Bay, which has been

compared in beauty with the Bay of Naples. Mrs. Pitt had other plans, however, and her party kept their places on the tram until it had passed through the town of Howth and came to a stop near a quay. Fishing boats, one with a bright red sail, were rocking in the tiny enclosed harbor, and beyond lay Ireland's Eye.

"Is that the Puck Rock?" inquired Philip. "It looks like a face—there, where I'm pointing."

"There is a face," said Betty; "I see it, too. My book says that this legend 'accounts for the natural phenomenon.' That means the face in the rock. Phouka is a fairy that looks like a goat, isn't it? Listen, and I'll read you the rest:

"Puck, or Phouka, is a mischievous, not to say malignant, Celtic sprite, whose name appears in Poulaphouca Waterfall on the upper Liffey and in the phrase 'to play Puck,' meaning to throw into utter confusion. The good St. Nessan of Ireland's Eye, while engaged in his task of illuminating the Gospel of Howth, was so plagued by this Puck that, in a burst of anger, he flung the sacred manuscript at his tormentor. The missile struck the irreverent goblin with such force that he was transfixed against the rock, where he remains to this day, 'to point a moral and adorn a tale.'"

"Wish you wouldn't read words like those, Betty," muttered John; "whoever'd know what they're all about? S'pose it means that Saint What's-his-name threw his book at Puck and then he stuck to the rock forever. Let him stick. I want my lunch."

Thus reminded, the others discovered that they were hungry, too, so they went to an attractive hotel, near the quay. In the summer season Howth is a popular resort, but on this spring day a chilly wind blew in from the Irish Sea.

"Who knows what a cromlech is?" asked Mrs. Pitt, when the edge was off their appetites.

No one seemed to have heard the word, not even Betty, so Mrs. Pitt had to tell them. John's interest failed when he heard that a cromlech is merely a "prehistoric tomb," usually erected to some great chief.

"But they're very different from any tombs you ever saw," Mrs. Pitt assured them. "I think you'll be interested in this one, John. It's somewhere on the estate of the Lord of Howth; we can wander about the grounds and perhaps you'll like to hunt down the cromlech."

The others were more enthusiastic, and they set forth on their search, little thinking that it would take them the entire afternoon.

Leaving the little hotel, they saw the remains

of an ancient abbey, clinging quaintly to a steep hillside. They then followed the road until they came to the gates of Howth Castle, long the home of the St. Lawrence family, whose founder is supposed to have been Tristram, a knight of King Arthur's Round Table.

“Nowadays there is nothing to forbid the entrance of strangers, but a royal lady was once turned away from these gates,” Mrs. Pitt related as they walked up the drive. “It was in Queen Elizabeth's time, that Grace O'Malley, whom the Irish called Granuaile (phonetically, *Graunya Walya*), Princess of Connaught, landed at Howth on her return from a trip to England. The Irish were always hospitable, you know; as late as 1842, when Thackeray toured the country, he and twelve others from the same coach would often spend a night at a gentleman's estate, being cordially received. No wonder, then, that Grace O'Malley looked for a welcome at Howth Castle, and was angry to find the gates closed fast because the family was at dinner. Apparently she possessed a royal temper, for she promptly kidnapped the baby heir, carried him away to the wilds of her own County Mayo, and refused to surrender him until his father promised never again to shut the gates during dinner-time. I suppose that's why we find them open to us to-day.”

They wandered through the Howth Castle

demesne, quite unmolested. Now and then, through gaps in the thick trees and hedges bordering the drives and paths, they had glimpses of lovely views beyond. At length they came to the castle itself, a quaint pile of four original towers, and additions of varying ages and styles. Workmen were busy about the place. It was rumored that a new lord was desirous of fitting his ancestral place with modern equipments.

John asked one of the carpenters to direct him to the cromlech, but a hopeless shake of the head was his only reply. A gardener, who presumably belonged to the estate, was of little more help, though he pointed vaguely with his knotty old finger. A pretty young servant-maid in a blue dress and a white apron, who was standing under an old gate with its coat of arms, had a gleam of intelligence in her eyes when they asked her.

"Now, look a' that!" she cried. "The crumbly stone, is it? Only yisterday I did be hearing Molly say there do be a big stone like, up by them rhododendrons."

"Which way are they?" demanded Mrs. Pitt hastily.

"Up the mountain, milady. Ye must follow the drive, down beyant."

This was all the help that seemed available, so they walked on down the drive, in the shade

of the huge, gray-green trees. It was grass-grown here, and pretty wild onion plants, with white flowers, were thick on each side. The avenue ended abruptly in a rough field.

“Here’s the jumping-off place, sure enough!” said John. “Now what?”

“This might be a path, Mrs. Pitt,” Betty hesitated. “Yes, it’s a real one a little farther on, but the grass grows all over it.”

“Perhaps the Lords of Howth want to conceal the paths to the cromlech, Betty. My word! Here’s a stile, and on the other side another long avenue!”

Philip and John, having entered into the spirit of exploration, were enjoying themselves hugely. They kept well in the lead, the others following. It seemed as though they walked miles along shady, ghostly avenues, or narrow lanes; it was as if they were in a kind of maze. At the end of an hour they seemed to be no nearer their goal, but they had no idea of giving up the search. They met no one on the way except a governess and two little girls with bare knees and long, shining hair.

“They’re the princesses from the castle,” laughed Betty, “and they’ll have us seized and put in a dungeon!”

But they didn’t. They only looked at the strangers curiously, as if they might like to speak to them.

At last they came upon the cromlech, at the end of a long, lime-lined avenue, moist with fallen leaves. As they loitered to examine it, John sat astride one of the fallen boulders.

"Only a lot of big stones," he remarked, opening his knife and beginning to whittle. "Don't tell me that this is a tomb!"

"But it was once, John," said Mrs. Pitt. "You see, that largest stone, the one which is standing almost on end, was held up by all the smaller ones. Can't you think how there would have been a tiny room beneath? That was where the ancient Irish sometimes buried their kings and warriors. The country people used to tell another story about the cromlechs. They said that Finn MacCool, the giant, had a pretty wife who tired of her over-large, clumsy husband, and ran away with a handsome youth, named Diarmid. Finn chased the pair all over Ireland, and every night Diarmid had to build just such a cromlech for a shelter."

"Did Finn MacCool catch them, Mother?" asked Barbara.

"Dearie me, Barbara! What a question! Come, and we'll see the beautiful rhododendrons that will soon be a mass of color."

They are planted in the bottom and up and down the sides of a little ravine, and many persons come to see them when they are in bloom. Barbara and Betty discovered buds here and

there, already showing their color, and as they wended their way back towards the road and the tram, Barbara pleaded:

“ Oh, mother, do say we may come back again when it's June! ”

CHAPTER FOUR

MORE ABOUT DUBLIN

“WHAT is it we’re looking for, mother? A church? I don’t see any here.”

“It’s St. Audoen’s Church we’re trying to find,” answered Betty promptly. “Here it is in the book,—‘one of the oldest religious buildings still in use in Dublin.’ I’d like to find it, but you certainly can’t see it from the High Street, can you? Oh, what funny broad steps, just like Clovelly! I’m going down them.”

The old church, strangely hidden away by the slope of a hill, is not visible from the street because of intervening houses; but by descending those wide steps which had taken Betty’s fancy, a dark battlemented tower is reached. Underneath is the entrance to old St. Audoen’s.

Mrs. Pitt tried the iron gate, but found it locked. Involuntarily she appealed to an old man who leaned against the fence, smoking. At first he only stared blankly at the intruders, but in reply to a sharp question he admitted that the gate key was in his pocket.

In a dim vestibule, they saw the ancient

tombs of the founders of the chapel, Lord and Lady Portlester, whose monument was erected in 1455. Pointing upwards, the old man muttered something about how part of the turret of the tower was blown off in "the big wind," but he could not tell them what year that was, (Mrs. Pitt thought it was in 1839), and he did not utter another syllable in their presence.

"I bet he's the only fellow in the British Isles who won't hustle for his shilling,—I mean 'bob,' " remarked John cannily. "Betty, it's up to you to tell us about the old hole."

After all, there was not much to tell about this dark, dreary bit of the past, where one forgets the twentieth century for the moment.

They groped their way through the vestibule to what was once an aisle but is now inclosed as a chapel. There is a twelfth-century Norman font, and under the worn matting one may read the inscriptions on the tombs of men and women of former centuries who were buried in the vaults beneath. Through a tiny doorway and up some steps they went until they came to a part of the old church where the roof has been destroyed, and the Gothic arches and inscriptions upon the pillars, walls, and floor are gradually disappearing. Some one has traced an underground passage which is supposed to have connected St. Audoen's with the

crypt of Christ Church Cathedral; but this did not tempt them to further exploration, and they were glad to get away from the dampness and mold.

“ Even the cats have the willies here! ” said John, as one poor frightened beast peered out for a moment from behind a crumbling Elizabethan tomb.

When they had seen St. Audoen's city gate, hastily built when Edward Bruce and his army were threatening the city, they turned back towards the High Street. Beyond the gate lay a district of such horrible poverty that Mrs. Pitt led them away immediately.

Christ Church Cathedral is very different from its neighbor, St. Audoen's; it is big and strong and splendid. Although the most ancient building in Dublin, it looks new. The Danes probably built a rude church here, and there still remains a wonderful crypt with enormous columns and arches untouched since the twelfth century. The building, as one sees it to-day, dates from about 1600; but it was entirely reconstructed in 1871, for the peat soil under the cathedral had caused some of the walls to sink.

In the cathedral many persons famous in Irish history are supposed to be buried; Strongbow's tomb is there, and his son's, that of his wife, Eva, and of his sister who referred to

her dead brother as "that great jaw-tooth, which has long been troubling me."

John was not fond of tombs or monuments as a rule, and he refused to linger by any of these except the one to the warrior, Strongbow, and his son.

"Who was Strongbow?" he demanded; "and why is the kid grabbing his stomach?"

"Who was Strongbow? Well, that's a long story. Let's sit here a few minutes, in these back chairs, and I'll tell you a little about him. In the twelfth century, there was an unjust and wicked Irish king, called Dermot MacMurrough. He was king of the province of Leinster, but he was so hated and persecuted for his evil deeds that at last he fled to England, where he appealed to Henry II. for help in putting down his enemies. Cautious Henry, mindful of all the other strong kings in Ireland, refused to take up MacMurrough's cause, although he gave permission to any of his subjects to do so. From South Wales, where the country was poor and not easily cultivated, there went accordingly a company of barons who desired to win rich estates for themselves in this new land. At their head was Richard de Clare, Earl of Pembroke, generally called Strongbow. The barons landed at Waterford, which they lost no time in capturing. Immediately after the battle, Strongbow was married to Eva, Der-

mot's daughter. Hearing that Dublin was in revolt against the Danes, he hurried to the scene of action and took the city by storm. From that day the English have alternately won and lost power in Ireland, but they never have left the country.

“ But I had almost forgotten about Strongbow's son, hadn't I? Fancy! The story goes that the ambitious boy had his father's leave to command some cavalry in a certain expedition; but when the battle began, he was overcome with fear, and disgraced his father by fleeing from the field. Uncontrollably angry, Strongbow killed the boy by running him through with his sword. The quaint statue undertakes to show us the exact position of the wound, as you see. Some one has suggested that the great chief himself may have planned this curious monument to atone for his deed.”

Centuries after the death of Strongbow, the boy's monument was put to an odd use. It became the “ 'Change ” of Dublin, the place where one man came to pay another a debt. The spot where the heavy coins were laid down is clearly shown by a depression in the head of the statue.

Before they left the cathedral, Mrs. Pitt read them a quaint description of Strongbow by an old historian, named Cambrensis: “ The earl was somewhat ruddie and of sanguine com-

plexion and freckle-faced, his eies grei, his face feminine, his voice small, and his necke little, but somewhat of a high stature. He was very liberall, courteous, and gentle; what he could not compasse and bring to passe in died, he would win by good words and gentle speeches. In time of peace, he was more readie to yield and obeie than to rule and beare swaie. . . . In all chances of warre, he was still one and the same maner of man, being neither dismaid with adversitie nor puffed up with prosperitie,"—a picture somehow quite unlike our notion of the great Anglo-Norman conqueror's appearance and habits.

Just as they left Christ Church Cathedral, the clatter of hoofs caused them to look quickly in the direction of College Green, where they saw a man in full uniform riding swiftly away on a glossy black horse. A bright pennant floated from a staff, fastened to a stirrup and supported by a band about the soldier's arm.

"He's one of the Fifth Lancers, stationed at Phoenix Park. They sometimes carry dispatches from one part of the city to another. Never mind, children, perhaps you'll see him some other day," laughed Mrs. Pitt, as they dashed up the path to the street, in the hope of getting a better view of the vanishing figure.

They found Dublin Castle all upset for re-

pairs. Painters had left their stagings and other belongings in the Upper Castle Yard, and carpenters hurried up and down. It was all very bustling and modern, not at all like the atmosphere of the thirteenth century, when the castle was first built.

“The original castle, inclosed by walls, was about as large as this Upper Yard,” said Mrs. Pitt; “only a bit of the old wall and two flanking towers are left now. Into this small space were crowded the Courts of Justice, the Exchequer, the Mint, the Viceroy’s residence, and the prison. The Lord Lieutenants, before they changed their place of abode, lived within a stone’s throw of the criminals. The authorities took but little care of the many buildings, and in the sixteenth or seventeenth century there was a fire, after which the viceroy wrote to the king that his loss only comprised a few barrels of powder and the ‘worst castle in the worst situation in Christendom.’ There are some people entering the State Apartments; we’d better go along.”

“Oh, see all the white and gold rooms!” exclaimed Betty, a few minutes later. “And there’s a real throne, like the one in St. James’s Palace, London. Isn’t it just like it, John? Do they have courts here, too, Mrs. Pitt; and who sits on the throne when there isn’t any king?”

“Great guns, Betty! I know that! It’s the cocky little Lord Lieutenant, of course.”

“Yes, so he does, John. At one time Dublin courts were most delightful, more brilliant than those across the Irish Sea. Sometimes they were exciting, too,—when a new Lord Lieutenant had not been well received, for instance. Then, as the state carriages drove through the lamp-lit streets, there were shrill screams of disapproval and occasionally stones were thrown. The young girls must have been very glad when they were helped out of their carriages to safe shelter. It took some courage, though, to enter the long room, make one’s first courtesy, and be kissed by the Lord Lieutenant. It must have been most agreeable to that functionary, for Irish girls have always been noted for their beauty. You remember what Father Prout says of them:

“Light on their feet now they passed me and sped,
Give you me word, give you me word,
Every girl wid a turn o’ the head,
Just like a bird, just like a bird;
And the lashes so thick round their beautiful eyes
Shinin’ to tell you it’s fair time o’ day wid them,
Back in me heart wid a kind of surprise,
I think how the Irish girls has the way wid them.”

“Just like the two girls I saw jumping up on an outside-car the first day we came,” observed Barbara, when the party and guide were

descending the broad stairs from proud St. Patrick's Hall. "My word! They were ducky, Mother!"

The castle has, of course, its dark memories. From the guide they heard about a siege during the rebellion of "Silken Thomas," a young lord deputy of the time of Henry VIII., who was over-fond of rich clothes and gorgeous retinues. In the ancient Record Tower is a cell where this unfortunate nobleman was imprisoned; near by is a secret chamber with no light or air, entered by a revolving door! On an upper floor is the cell of Owen Roe O'Donnell, who made his escape on a bitter midwinter's night by swimming the stream below. This brook still flows under the road as it did in Queen Elizabeth's reign, when the wronged young Irish noble, whose power was feared by the English, made his dash for the Wicklow mountains and liberty. The escape by the aid of a stout rope and the unclean moat was merely the beginning of far worse difficulties in store for him and his companions. There was a snowstorm in the mountains, in which one member of the party was lost, another died from exhaustion and exposure, and O'Donnell's feet were so frostbitten that he could not stand on them for months afterwards.

"Red Hugh was all right. It was no joke to get caught in those days!"

On their way to St. Patrick's Cathedral they went through crowded streets, where live many of Dublin's poor. Throngs of begging children literally blocked the way, and ugly, frowzled women lingered in doorways, babies in their arms. Very different Irishwomen were these from the dainty guests of Dublin Castle's gay balls. Here were many of the type that the Irish call "the full-of-the-door of a woman."

In front of a public house stood a strange vehicle which they stopped to examine. Upon two wheels was balanced a flat platform with a shallow hole in the center. It was loaded high with furniture.

Anticipating their questions, Mrs. Pitt explained that it was one of the low-cars usually found nearer the north quays. "It was the original jaunting-car," she said. "Workmen used to borrow these cars of their employers on Sundays to take their families to the country. People sat back to back, with their legs over the wheels. The car became very popular, and by and by it grew into the outside-car which we use to-day."

St. Patrick's has been a rival of Christ Church Cathedral ever since 1191, when certain early Norman archbishops built a new church on the island in the river Poddle, where St. Patrick, feeling thirsty, is believed to have

called forth a holy well. Christ Church belongs to the city, but St. Patrick's is claimed by the nation.

"I love the windows, mother," remarked Barbara, looking down the nave towards the chancel. "They are just the right colors,—so soft!"

Philip and John craned their necks, attempting to examine the banners of historic Irish regiments which are hung high on the walls of St. Patrick's. Undoubtedly these tattered relics had been in famous battles.

As might have been expected, it was Betty who remembered that Jonathan Swift, a great Irish writer, had been Dean of St. Patrick's. She found the plain wooden pulpit from which he used to preach, and his grave with that of "Stella," to whom he addressed his poems and letters.

"This stone, marked with the Celtic cross," Mrs. Pitt told them later, "was found during some excavations. Some think it marked the site of St. Patrick's well. But here, in the south transept, is something you will all like better. Aren't you coming, John?"

Leaning against a pillar was an old door, still strong and solid, but with a ragged hole in the center.

"Not big enough for a monk to hand you out bread and beer," said John, remembering an

experience he had had at St. Cross's Hospital, near Winchester, England.

"No, this door played its part in the feuds of Kildare and Ormond, powerful earls of the seventeenth century. Ormond had been summoned by Kildare to a conference, here in the cathedral. While this was in progress, their followers fell to fighting, and Ormond, fearing treachery, retreated to the Chapter House, where he barricaded himself until Kildare gave pledge for his safety. Then a hole was cut in the door with an ax, and the two shook hands. Those were days of mighty factions, much conflict and bloodshed. Come, shall we go now?"

Outside it seemed very noisy, after leaving the quiet shadows of St. Patrick's. The street peddlers, sitting on the ground, were crying their strange assortment of wares; shawled women stood on the street corners, talking in shrill voices or staring after the strangers. Betty drew her skirts closely about her and walked in the middle of the streets to avoid the swarms of children on the sidewalks and on the steps of houses. Betty never had liked "slumming," but now and then she ventured to glance in at these open doors, where she saw spacious stairways with beautiful carved balustrades. Clearly these were fine houses of the Irish gentry not many years ago.

"It's awful to let such people live where

there are doors like these!" she announced. "They're really just as nice as the ones near home, in Salem, Massachusetts! And I don't believe there are any better ones in Dublin, even where the fashionable people live."

Betty was visibly relieved to return to the polite regions of Fitzwilliam and Merrion Squares and of Stephen's Green, where at least the doorplates receive a brighter polish.



THE POLITE REGIONS OF FITZWILLIAM AND MERRION SQUARES,
WHERE AT LEAST THE DOORPLATES RECEIVE A
BRIGHTER POLISH.—*Page 58.*

CHAPTER FIVE

MOTORING TO DROGHEDA AND THE BOYNE VALLEY

ONE showery morning their jaunting-car jolted them over the cobblestones to quaint Steevens's Hospital, built long ago by a mysterious lady who went closely veiled because, it was rumored, her face was horribly like a pig's snout.

From there they drove to the museum and saw the exquisite Cross of Cong, made in the early part of the twelfth century when the goldsmiths did work which, for artistic quality and craftsmanship, has never been rivalled. There were also astonishing things which people have dug out of Irish bogs from time to time,—all sorts of things, from tubs of “bog butter” to wonderful jewelry of pure gold. Mrs. Pitt said that the golden collars, rings, and combs were probably like those worn by the lady in Moore's poem, who, in the reign of Brian Boru, walked unprotected through Ireland.

“What did she do that for?”

“The ballad doesn't precisely state,” replied Mrs. Pitt,—“but you may hear it for yourselves.”

“Rich and rare were the gems she wore,
And a bright gold ring on her wand she bore;
But, oh, her beauty was far beyond
Her sparkling gems and snow-white wand.

“Lady! dost thou not fear to stray,
So lone and lovely, thro' this bleak way?
Are Erin's sons so good or so cold
As not to be tempted by woman or gold?

“Sir Knight! I feel not the least alarm;
No son of Erin will offer me harm;
For, tho' they love woman and golden store,
Sir Knight! they love honor and virtue more!

“On she went, and her maiden smile
In safety lighted her 'round the Green Isle;
And blessed forever is she who relied
Upon Erin's honor and Erin's pride!”

From a distance they saw the new round tower which marks the grave of O'Connell, an Irish patriot whom an idolizing peasant described as “a grand man; the best within the walls of the world.” But better than this was their afternoon at Phoenix Park, a huge tract of land containing 1,760 acres. Here all kinds of pleasant things are done. When they had driven along some of the roads, and had had a glimpse of the Vice-Regal Lodge, they came in sight of a polo field. The boys insisted upon stopping here, and Mrs. Pitt and the girls were quite willing.

“It is pretty, isn't it?” exclaimed Betty,

standing up on the steps of the jaunting-car to look far over the green turf to where the All Ireland teams were galloping about, striking the ball with swift, sure strokes that sent it spinning far down the field.

“ I say, Mother! What’s all this row? ” demanded Philip, when bugles were suddenly heard. It proved to be the Lord Lieutenant and Lady Aberdeen, driving toward the scene in an imposing four-horse carriage with outriders.

“ Oh, this is great! Just five minutes more! ” John protested.

Mrs. Pitt finally had to tell the driver to take them back to town.

The following day was perfect for motoring, clear and cool. The modest estates of the northern suburbs looked very pretty in the bright sunshine, and the motor-car sped along the winding roads as if glad to be in the open country. The fields were a true Irish green, and the beauty of spring was in the delicate hawthorn and blazing yellow gorse, just beginning to show their colors in the hedges. Beyond lay low hills, some shadowy purple under the massed, white clouds which overhung them.

In the midst of a losing argument which John was holding with the chauffeur on the subject of being allowed to drive the car, they reached the village of Swords, consisting of eight or

ten clean whitewashed cottages, a church and a round tower. On they went down the one empty street, through Lusk, and farther on towards Skerries, which lies on a bleak point with the ocean at its feet.

“ It’s terribly lonesome! ” said Betty, looking at the rows of gray stone houses. “ The wind blows so, and there don’t seem to be any trees.”

This impression was forgotten, however, when they reached a high road along the cliffs from which there was a superb view. Some one pointed out an island on which St. Patrick is said to have lived for a while in order to escape from his enemies, the Druids.

“ There’s Balbriggan, yonder,” said Mrs. Pitt, after a while. “ Do you see the houses, across the fields? ”

“ Balbriggan,” repeated Betty thoughtfully; then her face lighted up. “ Stockings! ” she announced triumphantly.

Mrs. Pitt laughed. “ Fancy! How did you know that Balbriggan makes stockings? ”

“ I wonder if mine came from there,” said Betty, looking down at her ankles.

“ Perhaps,” said Mrs. Pitt, as she leaned forward to give the driver an order. She had once met two maiden ladies who lived at Balbriggan, in a little square house with a walled garden at one side. It was so prim and quaint

that Betty longed to see behind the brick walls, but a rosy, frightened girl told them that her mistresses were "from home—traveling." Yes, she told them, the garden was sweetly pretty, but she had her orders to admit no one.

About noon they reached Drogheda and, crossing the town, they were on a country road leading to Monasterboice.

"We will return to Drogheda in time for a late luncheon," said Mrs. Pitt.

There followed an animated discussion on the pronunciation of the name Drogheda, which should be *Dráw-ě-dǎ*.

"Oh, I say," protested John, "is that the way you do it? In the book it's spelled D-r-o-g-h-e-d-a. In the U. S. A., D-r-o-g-h doesn't spell 'draw'!"

"I know another name something like that," remarked Barbara, in her casual way. "It's Youghal. They call that 'Yawl.' A lady who has been there told me so."

The ruins of Monasterboice cannot be seen from the highway. The visitor must leave his car at a gate beyond which is a mossy bit of road. The gate is invariably locked and there is no caretaker, but there is a nice Irish stone stile over which one may climb. Beyond, amid the tall grass, guarded by a broken round tower, lie the ruins of the buildings that housed one of Ireland's famous religious colonies.

When there were only savage tribes in England, men were coming here in search of culture or of the peace of a religious life.

“In the days of St. Patrick, people in Ireland were very religious,” said Mrs. Pitt. “The saint was surrounded by a large group of holy men, absolutely indifferent to worldly things, anxious only to spread Christianity and to convert the pagan Irish. After St. Patrick’s death, these early clergy had a hard struggle to keep the new religion alive in a land where the Druids were still influential. Some of St. Patrick’s followers traveled through the island, converting, encouraging, and advising the people; others retired to remote islands or quiet valleys to devote themselves to prayer and the making and copying of annals and books. One of these men came here to Monasterboice at the close of the fifth century. Others joined him and lived in tiny individual huts or cells, going to a common chapel for worship. There was usually a round tower in such places, probably for protection. Thus these little communities started and, as time went on, they became famous as places of culture and education. Clonmacnoise, another famous colony, has been called ‘the secluded recess of the sons of nobles.’ ”

“A fellow would get a fine recess living here!” murmured John.

It is all strangely lonely and depressing. As an old Irishman once said, "All the heat that was in the sun wouldn't give a warm look to the ould place." Two of the finest, most elaborately carved Celtic crosses in Ireland are here, and the low ruins of two chapels, one of the twelfth century and one perhaps some hundreds of years older. Everywhere, even inside the chapels, grow wild grasses and weeds, a black, blighted tree, and the round tower with its shattered top overshadowing the place. Between the ruins and the road are a few scattered modern graves.

A peasant woman had been coming towards them from the direction of a cottage, across the fields. She began to talk about the crosses, which she said "came from Rome in one night," and she showed Mrs. Pitt and Betty a round mark faintly stamped on the under part of one of the arms of the cross. She told them a strange tale about this.

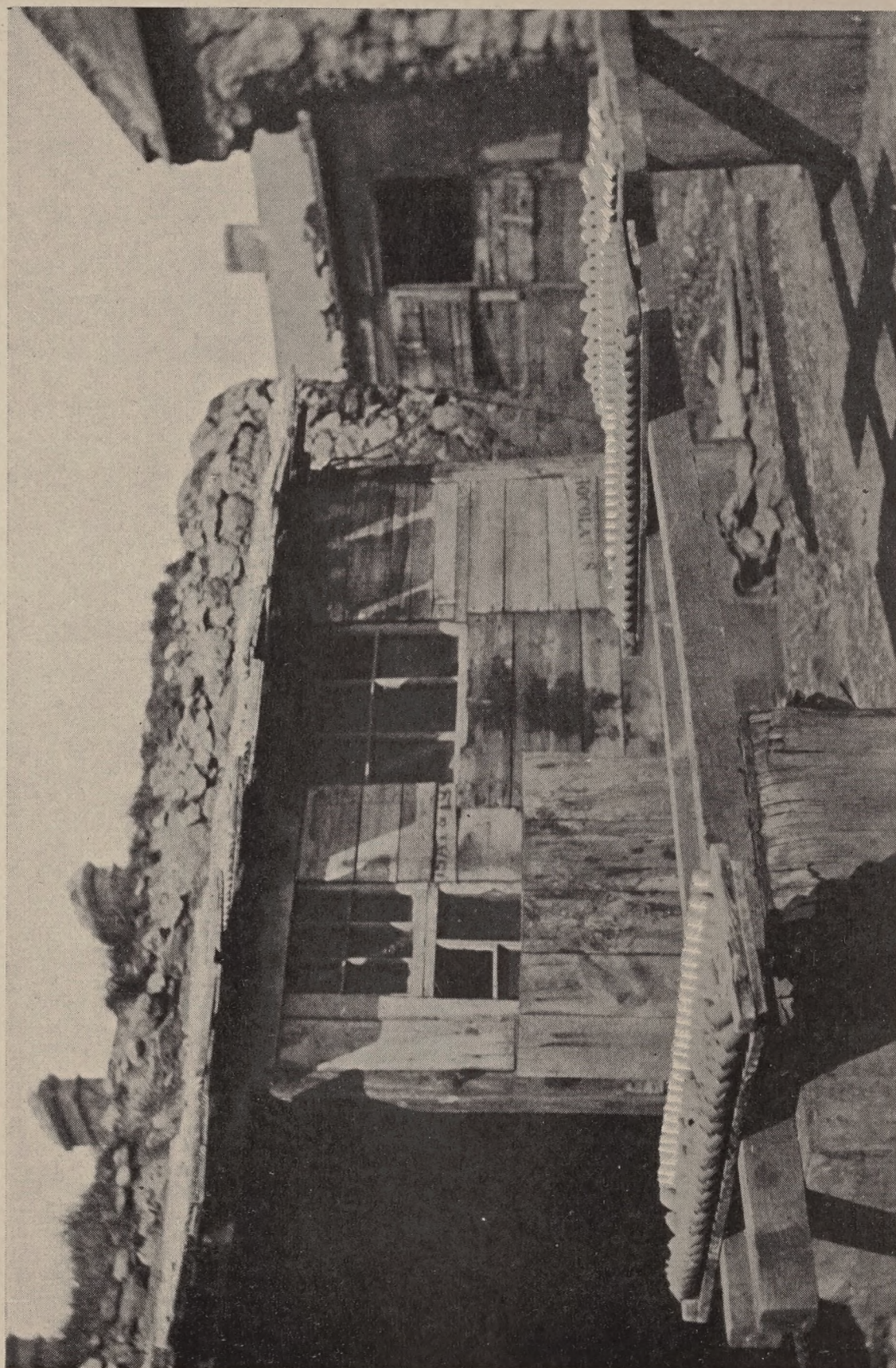
"Sure there was a grand holy woman," said she, "lived on her own share o' land, widout a person wid her but herself. They did be always havin' famines or sicknesses in thim days, and this saint she was afther bakin' cakes wid her own hands and handin' thim to ivery hungry body till he'd ate his fill. Ivery man o' thim was for callin' her a saint and for singin' her praises, for she never turned a poor body

away impty. From ind to ind of Erin there was no holier body. Well, wan fine day, the saint she died on thim. They was never done talkin' of the iligant monument they'd be afther puttin' up to her. But one of the holy fathers he tould thim to go to Monasterboice churchyard, the day on the morrow, to see was there onything new there. They wint, ma'am, and they seen her open hand, stamped with the cake on it,—there on yonder cross, to the sight and light of all eyes. And there yez can see it to-day, glory be to God! ”

“ Sure thing! ” assented John, squatting on the grass for a further examination.

Luncheon at the unattractive Drogheda hotel was soon finished, but the motor-car did not reappear. Their chauffeur, not a cheerful person at best, came up the steps at last, his face longer than ever, to report a necessary delay for some repairs on the carbureter. While these were being made, they went for a stroll, in the course of which John found the fascinating clay-pipe factory.

Who would imagine that ordinary white clay pipes can be made in such a delightful way! Instead of being turned out by the thousand from a huge modern machine, one man was making each pipe with his own hands. In a room at the head of a flight of clay-whitened steps, he was molding a thin bit of clay and putting it



JOHN FOUND THE FASCINATING CLAY-PIPE FACTORY. — Page 66.

in an iron form, from which it emerged a smooth, perfectly shaped pipe. Again and again this was done, and the children never tired of watching the process. Finally the pipe-maker led the way down to the yard, where lay hundreds of white pipes on big tables, and on the roofs of low sheds, drying in the sun. John could hardly be persuaded to leave the place, even after he had proudly invested in a pipe of his own.

Drogheda, with its gray old city gate and its grewsome memory of Cromwell's massacre in 1649, was soon left behind. They followed the road through the picturesque valley of the Boyne, a tiny stream which is sometimes almost choked by rushes. It is hard to picture it as the setting of one of the most famous battles in Irish history, that between the forces of Protestant King William and of Catholic King James in 1690.

"I say, Mother! I jolly well forget which won!" said Philip, turning to look back at the slender shaft of the Boyne Monument. "Oh, it was William, of course, and James had to flee to France. But some of these old fellows over here talk as if James won the Battle of the Boyne. That old gardener, Tummas, does."

"No wonder James got licked!" put in John. "Betty's book says he was a Stuart, and

the Stuarts were punk kings—got their heads cut off in England, and had to have a girl like that Flora MacDonald get them out of scrapes in Scotland.”

After a while the chauffeur left the river road and turned into a stony country lane, which the Irish call a “bohreen.” Its numerous windings brought them to the gate of a field in which was a great mound of rocks, overgrown with grass and trees. At regular intervals around the hill huge boulders had been placed.

“Now, whatever can this be?” questioned Barbara, as they all followed Mrs. Pitt into the field.

“Here’s a kind of a door!” cried Betty; “and see the funny flat stone with the circles drawn on it.”

“There’s a low passage beyond,” explained Mrs. Pitt; “you have to go on your hands and knees to get through it. Inside are tombs, for the hill was a burial place, probably of kings and chiefs of the Dedannans, a tribe of prehistoric invaders of Ireland. These burial hills are called tumuli, and this one at New Grange is the finest of them all. That’s Celtic carving on the stone at the entrance.”

“Kind of a cromlech, isn’t it?” John reflected.

“It’s so queer,” said Betty, “that it makes

me feel rather—rather hungry; and we've only just had our luncheon."

"There are a great many hills like that, aren't there, Mother? Aren't there fairy hills, too, and hills called 'raths'?"

"Oh, yes, Barbara, and be sure you never fall asleep on a fairy hill, for, if you do, you will 'wake silly'! Some raths are very dangerous and some conceal vast treasures, like one called 'Cashel Nore.' Inside of that is a great treasure which will belong to the O'Byrnes after five members of that family have been killed immediately after they have found the treasure. Fancy! Other raths were surrounded by banks of earth with thorn hedges, or they had stakes on top. Ditches were built for protection against wild beasts, and people lived inside the raths, sometimes even the kings, as you'll see at Tara. Now come; we must start."

"Once," said Philip, as they again approached the main road, "I read that they used to bury kings in their full armor, standing up in their graves, with their faces turned towards their enemies' land."

"Yes, Philip," replied his mother, "you are right, and this was supposed to have an evil effect upon the dead man's enemies, who would always be defeated in battle unless they came and reburied the body, head downwards."

On they went from New Grange, seeing an old ruined oratory at Slane, St. Erc's Hermitage. St. Erc, a noble of the court at Tara, was disgraced for disobeying the king's orders in rising and saluting St. Patrick. Between Slane and Navan, there was a fine view of the Marquis of Conyngham's castle, its lawns reaching to the Boyne Water. Trim, a little farther on, abounds in ruined castles and abbeys.

Not far away is Dangan House, a country seat of the Wellesleys, where there are associations with the Duke of Wellington.

"A caretaker once told me," said Mrs. Pitt, "that on the day of the Battle of Waterloo, 'he'd heard tell' that, just at sunrise, there was a fierce battle fought in the air over Dangan House. Those who were there saw fighting and the smoke from many guns; but if they once took their eyes away, it all vanished suddenly. The Duke and the Marquis of Wellesley were born in Dublin, but spent much of their youth at Dangan."

"We've seen so many things to-day," sighed Betty. "It's been like a moving-picture show, only much more wonderful. Oh, is this Tara? Really?"

The road had been steep and winding, but they did not realize how high Tara Hill is until an old beggar told them that the view extends into seven counties. To this hill five

great highways formerly led from different directions,—crude roads where men usually had to wade through the mud, in spite of the ancient Brehon Laws regarding the care of highways. Tara was abandoned in the sixth century, but before that it was the most important place in Ireland, where lived the “Ard-ri” (Ard-ree), or over-king, monarch over all the lesser kings, each ruling his own tribe.

“These few furrows and mounds alone remain to tell us of the great palace that was here,” said Mrs. Pitt. “In those days even king’s palaces were built of earth and wood, for mortar was not known until after the time of St. Patrick. But this does not mean that the palaces were not beautiful. In fact, we read of another royal palace at Emain which had a hundred and fifty rooms, each one big enough for six people to sleep in. Every room was paneled in red oak and bordered with copper; there were decorations in gold, bronze, and silver with bright jewels, and over the king’s head hung a silver wand to which were attached three golden apples. These made wonderful music, heard all over the palace as a signal for silence. There was an anteroom where the warriors hung their shining armor, and beyond, a huge banqueting hall where three hundred knights could be seated at the massive tables,

each man with his back to the wall, so that he need not fear lurking enemies. Many of those heavy gold ornaments which we saw at the Dublin Museum had been picked up here, and it seems probable that they were worn by the ladies of the court."

"Oh, please go on!" cried Betty enthusiastically. "It's all splendid! What else?"

"Great fairs were held at Tara, usually at the beginning of a king's reign. Crowds came to hear new laws read, to watch the races, or perhaps to hear St. Patrick preach. Here the saint disputed with the Druids, you know, and it was here that he preached his sermon on the Trinity, and picked the little three-leaved shamrock as an emblem. By the way, the shamrock is a tiny, insignificant plant which grows wild; no one had ever noticed it until St. Patrick made it forever famous among plants. Have you never seen one? Well, you will if you keep your eyes open, for it often grows by the roadsides. There's another kind with four leaves which the Irish have named 'Mary's Shamrock!'

"Cormac MacArt founded three colleges at Tara, for the study of law, of history and literature, and of military science. Cormac, grandson of 'Conn of the Hundred Battles,' was a kind of Irish King Arthur, but he retired during a prosperous reign because he had

lost one eye. No man who was not physically perfect could reign at Tara. Then, in 565, about a hundred years after St. Patrick had preached there, Tara was suddenly abandoned. It happened in this way: One of the Ard-ri's officers was murdered by a chief, named Hugh Guiry, and this man chanced to be distantly related to St. Ruadhan. The Ard-ri's servants found the murderer under the protecting roof of the saint, but, in spite of this, they seized him and took him to Tara for trial. Then the churchmen rose against the Ard-ri who had disregarded the authority of the church; it was the old, old quarrel for supremacy between the church and state. St. Ruadhan cursed the king and the seat of his government, and uttered that famous prophecy, 'Desolate be Tara forever and ever.' So great was the people's awe of the churchmen's power that the murderer was immediately surrendered, and Tara did indeed become desolate forever and ever. Now there are only these few ruins and the 'Lia Fail,' or ancient coronation stone. Yes, Barbara, that's it on the top of the hill."

The air had grown chilly; they sat close together and fastened all the buttons of their coats as the motor-car hurried them back towards Dublin through the twilight.

"I feel as if I belonged in a Celtic fairy tale, don't you?" said Mrs. Pitt. "There, people

always travel fast, for some reason. Don't you remember how ' they would overtake the March wind that was before them, and the March wind that was behind them would not overtake them until the evening came and the end of the day ' ? ''

CHAPTER SIX

IN COUNTY WICKLOW

“ALL these chaps are going fishing or golfing,” said Philip, glancing about one of the Dublin railway stations. “I wish we were!”

“We’re sightseeing just now, Philip; but your golf will come later. Only wait till we reach the west coast. At Bundoran there’ll be golfing, fishing, boating—everything. You’ll see. Quick, girls! There’s an empty third-class carriage!”

Their morning train did have a festive, holiday air. All its carriages were filled with people in sporting clothes, and the racks overflowed with golf bags, tennis rackets, and lunch baskets. Some people were off for the day only, probably to Bray, with its hotels, golf-links, and ocean walks; others were on their way to some more distant retreat in the lovely Wicklow Mountains. But all were ready for the hearty good time in the open air which the Irish, as well as the English, know how to enjoy to the full.

While on a motor trip our party had already seen one of County Wicklow’s “show places,”

—stately Powerscourt demesne with its fairy-like glen through which the River Dargle tumbles, and its views of great sombre mountains. Their visit to the Poulaphouca Waterfall, on the upper Liffey, was still a favorite recollection. Every one had been awed by the wild fall, dashing into an unfathomed, black whirlpool; but its legends were still nicer to remember.

“ That was a ripping story you told us, Mrs. Pitt,—the one about Cuttings, and his ride on the Phouka. What did the Phouka look like on that night? Was he always a goat? ”

“ Oh, he could take any form, you know; he is one of the most famous persons in all fairy mythology,” replied Mrs. Pitt. “ His other name is Puck, or ‘ evil one.’ That particular night he was a horse, black as coal, with his nostrils breathing fire, if I remember the story rightly. But you know it better than I do, Barbara; you tell it, but wait till we are through this next tunnel! ” she added, hastening to pull up the window.

“ Tommy Cuttings’s real name was Mul-lowny,” began Barbara obediently, “ but everybody called him Cuttings, for short, because he was a tailor. One night he had been working on a pair of trousers for the priest, and it was very late when he looked up at his mother, who was spinning, and said: ‘ They’re done,

Mother, and, if I had them home, wouldn't I be the lucky boy.' 'Take them home,' said his mother, 'and be lucky.' Tommy Cuttings was afraid to go alone, because that waterfall and the deep pool were favorite haunts of the Phouka,—that's why they are named for him, you know. But his mother thought him a coward and teased him until he made up his mind to go. When he came to the pool he heard a terribly loud sniffing and snorting, and there stood the Phouka; he was very, very black, and the fire he breathed was so bright! The horse asked where he was going, and Tommy told him about a wedding there was that night and said that in his bundle were the bridegroom's trousers. The Phouka said he would carry Tommy there and he made him get on his back, poor Tommy remembering all that he had heard about how the Phouka sometimes carried people over rivers and fields, up and down precipices,—anywhere, and always so fast that they almost fell off. But this time the Phouka went only a few leaps, and then he said that Tommy was the heaviest man he had ever had on his back, heavier than Oliver Cromwell and Alexander the Great and,—oh, I forget who else. Still he wouldn't let Tommy dismount until he happened to say that the trousers were really for the priest and not for the bridegroom at all. (Tommy didn't mean to tell, you see, but he

forgot.) When the Phouka heard it, he snorted: 'That's it; that's it, is it? You false tailor, to lay the burden of the church on the back of the Phouka!' And he tossed Tommy into the bottom of the black pool; he escaped drowning somehow, but the priest never got his trousers, and Tommy never again went out alone at night. There! that's all of it!" Whereupon Barbara lapsed into silence, gazing out of the carriage window. It is doubtful whether she had ever before talked for so many minutes at one time.

"I love that story," said Betty, "'specially because you'd never expect it to come out that way. Phoukas and fairy things never like you to mention the church, do they?" she asked Mrs. Pitt, who smiled assent.

At Rathdrum two jaunting-cars were waiting to carry them through the Vale of Clara to Glendalough. Before the long drive was over they were rather tired from the uncushioned, almost springless cars, but they were so delighted with the country that they hardly noticed the discomfort. First, they wound up the steep, winding streets of the town, and then the horses trotted along a road, sunny and level, high on a plateau. The golden gorse was everywhere, astonishingly bright and luxuriant. There were clumps of it in the fields and patches on the hillsides; it grew on cottage

walls, hiding the other vines and flowers, and thick hedges of it lined the road. A dazzling, golden way they traveled that day! As Betty said, "It couldn't be gloomy here, even if the sun went in." Sometimes the road lay through the woods, green, mossy and cool, but it always emerged again into the glory of the gorse-lined highway; and all the while there were fine views down deep ravines and through long valleys to shadowy mountain peaks.

"In ancient times—when Tara was at its proudest, for instance—there were oak forests in County Wicklow. Murkertagh O'Brien, an Irish king, sent over to King William Rufus some oak from Wicklow, which was made into the roof of Westminster Hall, in London. When men wanted to till this land, they cleared away large tracts of forest, but some trees remained which decayed and produced the peat bogs of to-day. These are military roads, built during the "rising of 1798," when they had to move troops across the mountains."

"Mother, are shillalahs made of oak?" asked Philip.

"No, they used to be cut from ash or black-thorn in a certain forest, near the town of Shillelagh. It was no simple matter, either, for an old-time Irishman to select and prepare a weapon. After the wood was cut, it had to be given a good rubbing with butter, and then

be left in the chimney several months. Usually shillalahs were about three or four feet long, with knotted ends, which could be deadly in the grasp of an angry Irishman. But we'll soon be at Glendalough, now. Here come the village children to meet us."

They were pathetic children in ragged clothes and bare feet. Some of them ran silently along by the jaunting-cars, holding out their hands appealingly; others cried over and over in a singsong chorus, "*Crusha—a-penny! Crusha—a-penny!*" which presumably meant, "Throw us a penny!" But, after several pennies had been tossed to them, they continued to follow the car until Glendalough's round tower was visible, tall and stately against a background of bare mountains, inclosing two blue lakes. The cars joggled down a rough hill and drew up before a hotel, where the five passengers were very glad to slip to the ground.

The sound of the little river Avonmore, flowing gently over smooth pebbles, came in at the open windows of the dining-room where they ate luncheon. Afterwards they went out through the hotel garden, in which everything grows as it will, crossed the Avonmore by a bridge, and, passing under two ancient Saxon arches, were in the "city of Glendalough."

"I don't see why they call it a city," demurred Barbara gently; "there are only some



UNDER TWO ANCIENT SAXON ARCHES.—*Page 80.*

ruins, a round tower, and a few old walls. Oh, yes, there is one little house over there, with a baby round tower on it."

"In the time of St. Kevin, one of the greatest Irish saints, who is said to have been educated with the prophet Jeremiah, Glendalough really was a city. It was something like Monasterboice, you know; there were seven churches here and a great many holy men, students, learned scholars, and tired or sick people. Here St. Kevin founded his monastic establishment in the sixth century. After he had made King O'Toole's old goose young and lively, the king gave him this land as a reward."

"What's that about a goose?" demanded John instantly.

"Why were there seven churches?" said his sister, at the same moment. "Oh, excuse us, Mrs. Pitt! We want to know so many things, don't we?"

"That's all right; questions show me that you are interested. There were seven churches in several other places, too, Betty, and sometimes seven altars in the abbeys. Seven has always been a mystical number. John, to answer your question, I will have to tell you a long legend. What! You wouldn't object to hearing it now? Very well, then, we'll sit here, where I can look up at the round tower. It is very fine, now, isn't it? Its cap fell in 1804,

but it's been restored, you see. Put your coat under you, Betty, if you sit on the grass. My word! It is good not to be tormented by the guides; they're usually disgusting.

“ Well, all this country once belonged to jolly young King O'Toole, who used to go hunting and fishing, enjoying himself immensely among these hills. But, after a long time, King O'Toole grew too old to hunt and ride, and then he became very melancholy. Things went badly with him until the day that he got a goose for his amusement. The goose was a treasure! It flew great distances, to King O'Toole's delight, and it would dive for fish in the lakes. But, alas! the goose grew old, too, and as lame as its old master; and then, when the goose couldn't fly any more, King O'Toole was more gloomy than ever. They say he came near drowning himself in the lake. But one day he met a young man traveling through his country and that meeting changed everything for the king,—and for the traveler, too. The two greeted each other politely and then had much conversation; strangely enough, the young man seemed to know all about the king,—his name, his goods, and his discontent. And he offered to make the goose young, so that it could fly as well as it ever had in its life. That is, he would do this on condition that the king give him all the land covered by the rejuve-

nated goose in its flight. The king promised. Well, the stranger made a sign over the goose, tossed it up in the air, and away it flew, around all the territory belonging to King O'Toole. It was as young as ever, and the king laughed for joy. The stranger claimed all the land over which the goose had flown, and the king had to keep his promise and give it to him. Then the young man confessed that he was St. Kevin, and explained to what use he intended to put the land. And that's how Glendalough came into existence."

Under the shadow of the round tower, with its seven windows, were the cathedral, the abbey, and several chapels; but few traces of these are left to-day,—only a few low walls, a square doorway or two covered with vines and moss, and a round arch here and there. As at Monasterboice, there are modern monuments and crosses to mark graves recently made within these holy precincts; and, as at Monasterboice, again, there are riotous wild grasses and reeds.

But "St. Kevin's Kitchen," a later name given to one of the churches, is to-day quite different from the rest of the ruins. Its ancient stone roof is still perfect and its steeple is a smaller edition of the large tower close by. Inside it is dark and has a dirt floor.

"This gives us an idea of what the ancient

churches and houses were like," said Mrs. Pitt, as they followed the road to the lake.

"Where are the rest of the churches?" asked Betty. "You said there were seven."

"Well, what few remain are scattered about, dear; one or two stood near the lake, I believe, and two we passed between the village where the children left us, and the hotel. Look back now, Betty. Do you know, I like the round towers better than anything else in Ireland."

"I do believe I love them best, too," agreed Betty; "this one follows you, doesn't it? You can't look anywhere without seeing it, and you don't want to."

It was lovely by the Upper Lake, late that afternoon. While the boys explored the shores, the others sat on a pile of logs, near the beach, now dreaming, now talking softly. The lakes and mountains of Glendalough have a solemn beauty. The mountains rise steeply from the rocky shores—dark and frowning. There are scarcely any trees to be seen; there never were any on the mountains, and most of those along the shores of the lake have been cut away.

"There aren't many birds, either, are there?" reflected Mrs. Pitt. "I wonder if they all followed the larks that St. Kevin banished because they disturbed his workmen's early morning sleep,—the workmen who built

his churches. On the side of that mountain," she added, "thirty feet up from the water, is St. Kevin's Bed, a hole about four feet square. Legend says that the saint scooped it out of the rock with his finger-nails, and that he went there to escape an unhappy girl who had fallen in love with him. But she followed him and, in anger, he threw her backwards into the lake. There are many legends about St. Kevin. I'll tell you more after dinner to-night, if you like. We must go back now. Where are the boys?"

They clamored for the stories after dinner as they sat in the musty drawing-room, made cheerful by a brisk fire in the grate. There was no fear of interruption, for they were the only guests in the hotel. These anecdotes Mrs. Pitt read from books of which she always seemed to have just the right ones in her traveling bag.

"Speaking of the gentleness of St. Kevin," she said, "Cambrensis, that historian whom I often quote, tells us that 'when he retired to keep the forty days of Lent in fasting, meditation, and prayer, as he held his hand out of the window, a blackbird came and laid her four eggs upon it; and the saint, pitying the bird, and unwilling to disturb her, never drew in his hand, but kept it stretched out until she brought forth her young, and they were fully fledged and flew off with a chirping quartet

of thanks to the holy man for his convayniance.' "

Barbara looked up from her game of solitaire to remark: " Then he had to eat and do everything with one hand for all that time! Fancy! "

" Over by St. Kevin's Kitchen," her mother went on, picking up another book, " there is a queer shaped stone with a round, deep hole in the middle. They call it ' deer stone,' and this is its story: A poor man, whose wife had died, was left with a baby whom he had no idea how to care for. He went to the saint to ask advice and, according to one of the Glendalough guides, this was the saint's reply: ' Did ye never hear tell of the lilies of the field,' says he, ' and who clothes them? Come to this stone, my good man, every morning after airly mass,' says he, ' and I'll go bail ye'll get a drop for the baby ' ; and sure enough at daybreak the poor fellow saw a deer come and lave a quart o' new milk in the stone, and that fed the cratur till he grew big enough and learned enough to be the saint's coadjutor; but the stone is there to speak of the miracle this day! Then one day the saint turned a woman's loaves of bread into stones, because she had lied to him; and they are still to be seen somewhere about."

Mrs. Pitt only read them one more tale that evening,—the story of how a great gap in one

of the Glendalough mountains had been made by the giant, Finn MacCool, with one blow of his sword, and how he and another giant used to shake hands across the lake.

Before going to bed, they stole out to peep at the round tower in the moonlight. Mrs. Pitt and Betty are still uncertain whether it looked lovelier that night, or on the following morning as they were driving away, and looked back to see it flooded in bright sunlight.

CHAPTER SEVEN

BETWEEN TWO IMPERIAL HOTELS

“IMPERIAL HOTEL! Imperial, lady! Imperial!”

So “imperial” was this particular head porter, speaking close to Mrs. Pitt’s ear, that before she realized it she had allowed him to take her handbag. Once they were secured within the rickety omnibus, the porter promptly deserted his sleepy captives. Vanishing for long periods is a favorite habit of head porters!

It was past ten o’clock at night, and, in the vicinity of the railroad station, Waterford was very dark. Nothing could be distinguished beyond the few flickering station lights, and the only sound was the boisterous singing of a popular song by a group of waiting newsboys. After what seemed a long delay, they finally rumbled over rough pavements, to be escorted into a forlorn, deserted hotel.

An untidy chambermaid led them up several flights of stairs, some wide, some narrow and winding; at last she opened the door of a huge room, in which stood two beds, one in shabby-genteel hangings and canopy, the other quite

unadorned. There were many heavy pieces of furniture, faded red hangings at the windows, and a bell-rope with a tassel. Mrs. Pitt remarked that the room would do, and she and the girls said an amused good-night as John and Philip were led away to no one knew what strange quarters.

“ You and Barbara will sleep in the big bed, won’t you, Mrs. Pitt? ” Betty’s voice was a bit troubled. “ I’d rather have this plain little bed; I’d feel more at home in it. The other is like—like—— I really believe it belonged to Brian Boru! ”

And so, after much laughter over their queer bedroom, and several unanswered pulls at the bell-rope, they tumbled into bed to sleep until the bright sun, streaming in between the thick red curtains, woke them.

After breakfast they went out for a stroll about quaint Waterford. It may actually have been founded in the year 155, and certainly was an important colony of the Danes when the English invaders came in 1171.

“ Not far away is a point of land called Baginbun Point, where ‘ Irelande was lost and won ’ when the first Englishman stepped upon Irish soil,” said Mrs. Pitt. “ As Strongbow’s ships were sailing into Waterford harbor, there was a tower upon one hand and a church upon the other. Being told they were ‘ The Tower of

Hook and the Church of Crook,' Strongbow said, 'I will take Waterford by Hook or by Crook.' "

"And that's why we say 'by hook or by crook' to-day!" finished Betty quickly. "Strongbow invented it! I'll always remember that now."

As they started for a walk on the quays along the River Suir, they saw Reginald's Tower, almost opposite their hotel.

"Did old Strongbow build it?" asked John.

"It is supposed to have been here even before Strongbow came; and it may have been built in 1003 by a Dane, named Reginald. Strongbow used it as a fortress, and since that it has been a mint and a jail. I don't know what they use it for to-day, Philip, or, indeed, whether they use it at all. Let's find the cathedral now, up on this hill, near the old French church."

Passing the tower, its rough stones appearing as solid to-day as when the English invaders captured the town, they walked along the broad street by the river. Large ships were drawn up to the quays to be loaded or unloaded, and there were a number of warehouses, yet no business seemed to be done. There is a sleepy, lazy air about the quays and the small shops. Shawled women, having brought in produce from the country, were leisurely repacking

their donkey carts with a few provisions to carry home, while the men leaned against sunny walls, smoking and chatting. There was hurrying about, orders were given near the ships, there were shouts and the braying of donkeys, yet no one seemed to accomplish much. Apparently the old proverb, "All bustle and no business, like a Waterford merchant," still holds good.

The cathedral is stately and so old that it is sometimes reported to have been built by the Danes in the eleventh century. Close by, on the side of a hill, is the old Huguenot church, once a Franciscan monastery, in part of which the exiled Huguenots worshiped. The great-great-grandfather of Lord Roberts was an architect of Waterford. He married Susanne Sautelle, a Huguenot girl, and the two are buried here. Later in the day, when on a drive through the town, their jarvey pointed out Lord Roberts's estate, but told the party that the general very seldom occupied it.

"Here's something funny," declared Betty, that afternoon. They were on the train once more, and Betty had been reading her favorite "Child's History of Ireland," by Joyce. "The book says that the first frogs in Ireland were found near Waterford in the sixteenth century; and that there were no snakes or toads. Of course I knew there weren't any

snakes, because St. Patrick wouldn't have them. But where could that first frog have come from? " It was a question that no one was able to answer.

It was early evening when they arrived at Limerick Junction, which consists of a single station with a connecting hotel, the two set down in the midst of the fertile fields of County Tipperary. To their great disappointment, it was too late to catch a train to Cashel, so they ate their dinner in a room crowded with noisy commercial travelers, and were then shown to some clean little bedrooms, lighted by candles.

"My word!" exclaimed Mrs. Pitt, taking off her hat. "I've been in many a worse hotel, even if this one has railway tracks on both sides of it. Probably there are very few trains at night."

Cheerfully they went to bed, but not to sleep, for the noise soon became unbearable. Mrs. Pitt had been right; there were not many through trains, but men seemed to be moving engines back and forth, and around and about, during the whole night. And even little Irish engines can puff and pant and let off steam! Never attempt to sleep at Limerick Junction is the advice of Mrs. Pitt and her party.

One of those troublesome engines carried them the few miles to Goold's Cross on the

following morning; there, after some delay, they boarded another train for Cashel.

“That Dublin chauffeur would have got us there in twenty minutes,” remarked John, in disgust.

“Irish trains are rather exasperating,” admitted Mrs. Pitt, who never really condemned anything. “They amble along at any speed that happens to suit the engineer’s mood, and they seldom care to go very far. They travel a little distance in one direction, and then passengers must change to another train and continue in a slightly different direction. One needs plenty of time to go about Ireland. Of course, we all know that trains never think of starting on time. It was in Kate Douglas Wiggin’s book, ‘Penelope’s Irish Experiences,’ I think, that the engine had ‘gone cold on the engineer,’ and there was such a long delay that a railway official was finally approached upon the subject. He seemed so unintelligent that *Penelope* impatiently asked, ‘Is it possible you don’t know the time the trains are going?’ The man stared: ‘Begorra, how should I? Faix, the thrains don’t always be knowin’ thimselves!’”

At this point their particular train slid softly alongside the Cashel station. Forty-five minutes were to elapse before it would again turn its head towards Goold’s Cross Junction; Mrs.

Pitt knew that she and her party must be on board, or else they would probably spend the whole day at Cashel and never get to Holy Cross Abbey at all. Therefore, a bargain was made with a jarvey who soon carried the party off at a gallop towards Cashel village. A great rock rises steep from the plain below, and on its summit are the gray ruins of palace, chapels, abbey, and round tower.

“Cashel was the home of the ancient kings of Munster,” explained Mrs. Pitt. “Idols were worshiped here in the king’s palace, and the ‘shee,’ or fairies, had their share of worship, too. ‘Shee’ were believed to be the Dedannans who, when they were conquered by other invaders, went to live underground and became fairies. Each Dedannan chief selected a green mound, (‘shee’ in Irish), or fairy hill; these are usually old burial mounds or hills with raths on top, like that at New Grange, you know. The fairies, as well as their dwellings, were called ‘shee.’ The name Cashel is Gaelic for a circular stone fortress.

“A few Irish peasants still believe that delightful legend of the origin of the fairies. An old blind man, by the roadside, once told it thus: ‘The fairies,’ he said, ‘I will tell you what the fairies are. God moved from His seat, and when he turned around, Lucifer was in it. Then Hell was made in a minute. God



"CASHEL WAS THE HOME OF THE ANCIENT KINGS OF MUNSTER."
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moved his hand and swept away thousands of angels. And it was in His hand to sweep away thousands more. "Oh, God Almighty, stop!" said the Angel Gabriel. "Heaven will be swept clean out." "I'll stop," said God Almighty; "Them that are in Heaven, let them remain in Heaven; them that are in Hell, let them remain in Hell, and them that are between Heaven and Hell, let them remain in the air." And the angels that remained between Heaven and Hell are the Fairies.' "

Mrs. Pitt had then to stop talking while they drove along the wretched streets of Cashel, passing through the market place where a cattle fair was in progress. It was a relief to be out of reach of the jostling, excited animals with their threatening horns, and, as the horse scrambled up the stony road to Cashel Rock, Mrs. Pitt continued:

"St. Patrick converted to Christianity a ruling king of Munster, and later Murkertagh O'Brien granted 'Cashel of the Kings' to the church to be the seat of an archbishop, with a cathedral and a monastic school. Thus Cashel, the famous residence of pagan kings, was outshone by Cashel, the center of Christian religion and education. All these buildings, with the exception of the round tower, are of Christian date."

Near the gateway by which visitors enter is

an ancient statue of St. Patrick; it rests upon a great stone where, tradition says, the minor kings of Munster paid tribute money to their superior king. Passing this by, one finds a wilderness of gray ruins, now crumbling and bare but once beautiful in architecture and elaborate carving. All parts of the cathedral, the palace keep, and the round tower are worth examination, but even more so is Cormac's Chapel, built by Cormac MacArt in 1127. Students of such things call this the "oldest consecrated chapel in Ireland."

"See the beautiful doorway," began Mrs. Pitt, calling attention to the chapel's finest points; "the triple arch is marvelously carved in zigzag and beaded design. What a strange creature, there in the center! It looks like an enormous beast at which a man on horseback is aiming an arrow from his long bow. Inside, the roof is rounding and vaulted, and there are graceful pillars, carved capitals, and other decorations. A wonderful place, isn't it, Betty? Over there is a bit of Cormac MacArt's own carved sarcophagus, and—— O dear! the driver says it is time for us to go!"

At most inappropriate, breakneck speed, they whirled down the hill, through the village, and over the level stretch to the station. Then some of them turned to look back for the last time at the historic rock, the round tower, and

the lofty, irregular mass of the cathedral vividly outlined against the sky. What an extraordinary scene there must have been at Cashel in the eleventh century! Once again Betty wished she had the power to go back hundreds of years to see how things really were. But, of course, she would reserve the right of a speedy return to the twentieth century, she reminded them.

“Here’s Goold’s Cross again! That means another change of trains for us!” John let down the window with a bang and, putting out his hand, opened the door.

They were glad that the train for Thurles and the north was due in ten minutes; it was as good as the station master’s word, too. At the town of Thurles they had a late luncheon and then climbed into a jaunting-car for the drive of three miles, through cheerful country, to Holy Cross Abbey. The fields are green and the cattle good, having rich grazing. The farmhouses, with their barns and sheds built around a square yard, look almost prosperous. There are no bogs or stony fields, but wide, fertile lowlands with hawthorn hedges marking the boundaries. Mrs. Pitt told them that this part of County Tipperary is known as the “Golden Vale,” and that it is a great dairy district, where butter is made for the English markets.

“Holy Cross Abbey is said to have been erected to preserve a piece of the true cross which was sent by a Pope to a king of Ireland, grandson of Brian Boru. The abbey became rich and powerful, its abbot, a peer in Parliament, being known as Earl of Holy-cross. It is very much of a ruin now, however; many people think it the finest monastic ruin in Ireland. That’s why I wanted you to see it. Here we are. Come along, John; this is the way!”

An hour was spent in wandering about the lovely ruins, admiring the roof of the chancel where the fan-vaulting is so perfect, or climbing up tiny steps used by the monks to reach apartments over the choir. Moss, grasses, and tiny wild flowers have helped to make it all more lovely in its decay; in the nave of the cathedral some of the gravestones are scarcely visible above the tall grass. Just outside the east window flows the “gentle Suir,” and the rushing of this little river was for some time the only sound to be heard.

All at once they were startled by the shrill bray of a donkey, mingled with the horn of a motor-car; and, just as Mrs. Pitt stepped out of a transept door, she came face to face with a friend from London. There were surprised greetings and rapid explanations.

“You say that you are alone? Quite by yourself in this lovely Irish country? Oh,

But of course Mrs. Pitt relented, and, to the children's delight, the jarvey was paid and sent back to Thurles. They had accepted an invitation to go on to Cork in the motor-car.

There was a glimmer left when they came in sight of a hill upon which a sharp bit of ruin stood outlined.

A map showed them that this was indeed the remains of Edmund Spenser's castle, which was

burned during one of the many Irish rebellions of Elizabeth's reign. The poet, his wife, and children, barely escaped the flames, and fled to Cork. No Englishman was very safe in Ireland in those days, and the destruction of this home, where parts of the "Faërie Queene" were written, was one more disappointment for the luckless poet.

"Doneraile is not far away," Mrs. Pitt's friend told them. "We motored there last week and had a walk through the old place which was once a splendid demesne. There are still fine trees, drives, terraces, and gardens, but they have no care and will soon be entirely overgrown with weeds. Fancy! The place has always belonged to the St. Leger family, you know, and the house is really rather good style, but the present lord never goes there, I am told. It was Mistress Betty St. Leger (she was afterwards the Honorable Mrs. Aldworth), who was admitted to Freemasonry. She hid inside a clock at Doneraile, and from there overheard the men at their mysterious meetings. She was finally discovered, and, for their own protection, the men let her join the order. It was clever of her, wasn't it?"

"Ripping!" said John. "She'd have led the Suffragettes, wouldn't she?"

It was so dark when they passed Blarney that

they had no glimpse of the castle; but what did that matter when they would be driving out from Cork on the following day?

And so they drew up at the familiar Imperial Hotel, in its narrow street. "Florrie," the head porter, greeted them with low bows and sufficient ceremony to indicate that in his opinion the Imperial, "for elegance and comfort" still "vies with any hotel in the kingdom." So wrote Mr. and Mrs. Hall, famous Irish travelers in the early part of the last century. John and Betty could not entirely agree with them, but they had a fondness for the Imperial, having there eaten their first luncheon on Irish soil.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SEEING CORK AND BLARNEY CASTLE

“It’s the bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters of the river Lee.”

FATHER PROUT, the celebrated poet of Cork, did well to praise the music of Shandon Bells. Whether the visitor stands within or without the church while the old sexton mounts to the loft and slowly pulls the bell-rope, the sound is sure to be musical and soft. As Shandon Church is not a Catholic church, it could only have been Father Prout’s general interest, as a lover of Cork, which made him compare its chimes so favorably with those of Notre Dame at Paris, St. Peter’s at Rome, or of St. Sophia at Constantinople.

There is nothing else remarkable about Shandon Church. To be sure, it possesses an old font which attracted Mrs. Pitt’s attention.

“Do you use it still?” she asked.

“Oh, we takes ’em as we finds ’em. Trade’s pretty slack now. There’s been only two baptisms in six weeks!” and, shaking his head in

disapproval, the caretaker pocketed his fee and opened the door for his visitors.

They walked along the streets in the spring sunshine, now stopping for a moment on one of the high arched bridges, now loitering near a quay where children were playing or beggars sunning themselves. Left behind were the busy, broad quays; they saw no more smart shops, fine houses, or pretty ladies driving their pony carts. Here were narrow, steeper streets, closely lined with the thatched cabins which shelter the poor. Women slouched in the doorways—ugly, tousled-haired women, whose children were unspeakably ragged.

“Look,” said Betty, “they can have birds, even if they are poor. See how many bird-cages there are on the walls, up under the eaves! It’s funny to see them there, isn’t it? Perhaps it’s because they can’t have any gardens that they like the birds so much!”

By and by they came upon a schoolhouse where troops of boys were tumbling into the courtyard, some already busy with marbles on the pavement. Just across the way, standing among trees, with green grass and flowering shrubs around it, was the cathedral of St. Finn Bar, locally pronounced “S’nf’n Bar.”

“It’s quite modern,” remarked Mrs. Pitt, “although there are a few old bits, of course,—

that Saxon door and the tower of the steeple. There was an ancient church here once, you know, and a round tower, part of the religious establishment of St. Finn Bar, 'the white-haired,' in which there were seven hundred priests, monks, and students. This saint is said to have founded Cork, although the honor is also claimed for the Danes of the ninth or tenth century. No, John, you need not go inside. I believe that the tomb of the Hon. Mrs. Aldworth, the lady Freemason, is there, but that's of no special interest to us, I suppose. You want to look at it, Betty? I'll go along, then."

When they came out, John was nowhere to be seen, but soon he emerged from behind an imposing gate post, opposite the cathedral entrance. He had been trespassing, exploring the beautiful grounds and residence of one of the churchmen.

After a while they came to a bluff from which they looked across the River Lee to a suburb, with pretty houses up and down the hillside. Old Cork is in the valley, but its modern home section and its suburbs are on high ground. Descending the hill, they took a tram back to the center of the town.

"There's that old book and print shop!" cried Betty suddenly, when they were in Patrick Street. "And Mr. Massey, who keeps it,

is so nice. May I go in again, Mrs. Pitt, just for five minutes? ”

Mrs. Pitt and Barbara going with her, found it a delightful, musty shop. Mrs. Pitt bought one or two books which she considered great bargains; as for Betty, she would have spent all her money if Mrs. Pitt had not hurried her away.

In the meantime, John and Philip had made a discovery.

“ I say, Mother, you never told us they have inside jaunting-cars, too. We saw one; it was frightfully jolly! ”

“ You ought to see it,” seconded John. “ There’s a cover, and the seats are inside, facing each other. But it tips so that the people almost fall out. Look, look! There comes one now! See it, Betty! ”

“ It’s convenient when it rains,” said Mrs. Pitt, laughing with the children, “ but it is difficult to stay in, especially going up hill, unless one is accustomed to it as the people of Cork are. It tips alarmingly on its two wheels, and has no door to hold one in. I’ve seen passengers (‘ fares,’ the jarveys call them) fall out; the driver really has the only comfortable place. Come; shall we go back for luncheon now? ”

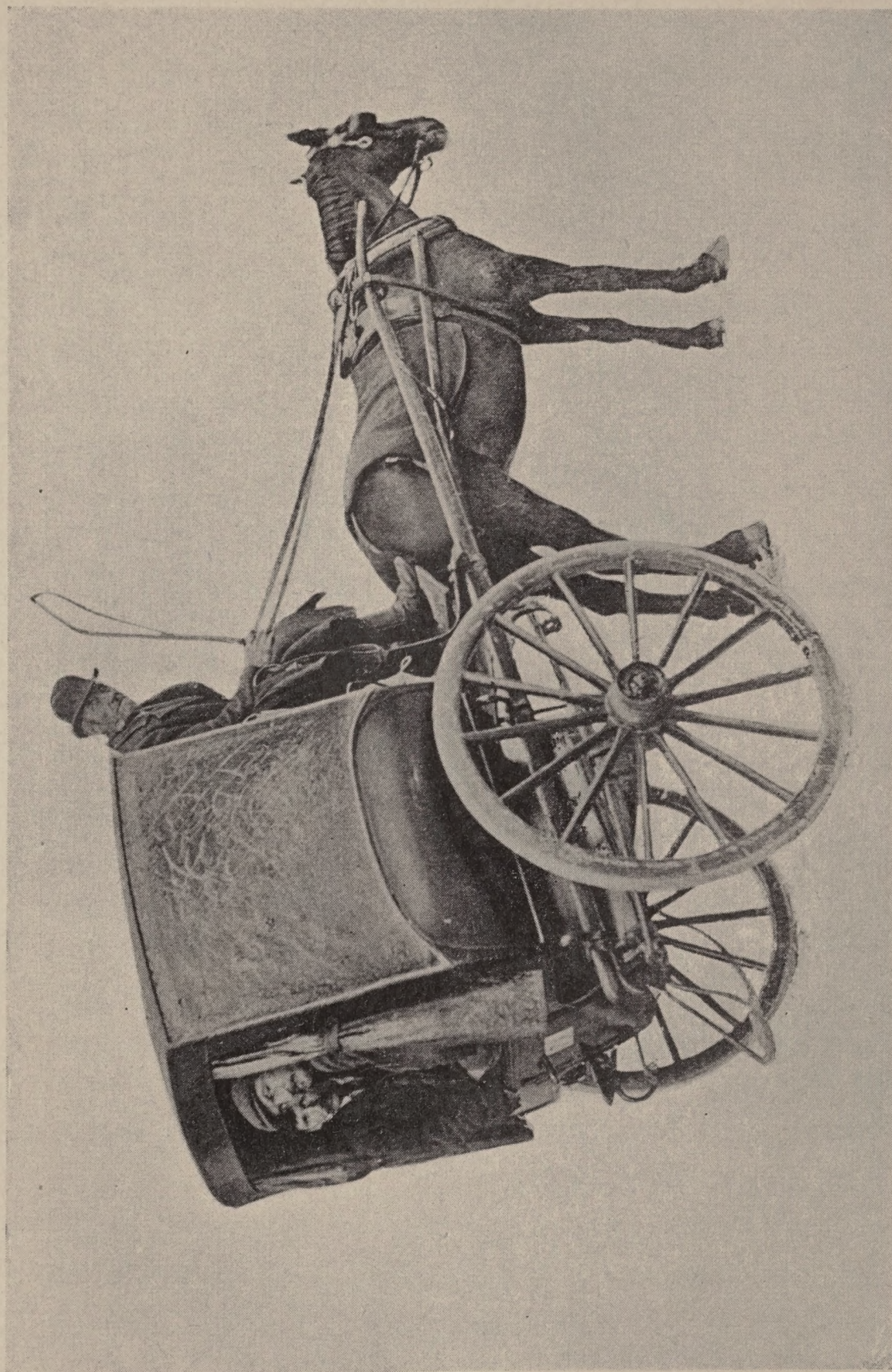
The majority of the buildings in Cork—in fact, in the entire south of Ireland—look older

than they actually are. Many are out of repair, having a forlorn look. There is a pathetically shabby, one-roomed library opposite the Imperial Hotel; and the hotel itself is a strange combination of attempted grandeur and innate ugliness, with traces of wear and neglect. A wide doorway, a spacious hall and stairway, lead from one of the main streets; but the door is never opened now, its panes of glass are broken, and the hall and stairs are given over to the spiders and used only as storage places for the bicycles of the "boots" or head porter. Nowadays the visitor enters by a low doorway in a side street, and to reach his huge, damp room, he may have to grope his way around dark corners, along narrow halls, and up winding stairs. If he is at all fastidious, he may be thankful that there are no windows to light his dusty path.

While they were waiting for luncheon to be served, they stood by the writing-room fire as Mrs. Pitt told them a bit about Father Mathew, of whom Cork is justly proud.

"He wouldn't let men drink, would he, Mother?" Philip questioned. "I think I've read about him."

"That's it, Philip. It was Father Mathew who started the great temperance movement which has done much good for the Irish, the English and Scotch, as well. Father Mathew



"IT'S CONVENIENT WHEN IT RAINS, BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO STAY IN, ESPECIALLY GOING UP HILL."

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was born in Cork in 1790, and here he became a much-loved priest. Gracious, kind, and sympathetic, he had much influence over the people. In his time drunkenness was almost universal in Ireland; it was looked upon practically as a virtue, especially with the higher classes, among whom no host would permit a guest to depart sober. Father Mathew, realizing how this appalling state of affairs was injuring the Irish, started a campaign against intemperance. At first the movement was confined to the city of Cork, but soon Father Mathew's success was so great that he traveled all over Ireland, lecturing to great crowds and making converts. Some went to great extremes; a few would drink water only from a cup because a glass might have been used for something stronger. But the country was vastly improved by Father Mathew's teaching, even if there were some who went back to the old drinking habits again. Men almost worshiped Father Mathew; and thousands agreed with the peasant who said: 'He was a great man. . . . There couldn't be better than what he was.' "

After luncheon, "Florrie," the stout, red-faced head porter at the Imperial Hotel, called an outside-car, tucked the rugs around his guests, and ordered the jarvey to drive to Blarney Castle. A tram-car line now runs to the small manufacturing town of Blarney; there

are plenty of motor-cars for hire, too, but Mrs. Pitt thought the old-fashioned, jolting way of travel best. Besides, the drivers always have such nice stories to tell.

“What'll it do to a fellow,” John demanded — “kissing the stone, I mean? What do they kiss it for, anyhow?”

“Shure, 'n' hev yez never heard a person talk, belike, what's kissed the Blarney Stone?”

“Say, Mrs. Pitt, what does it do?” asked John, turning from the twinkling-eyed driver who he felt might be guying him.

“Whoever kisses the stone is supposed to buy the gift of eloquence,” she replied. “The story dates back to the fifteenth century, when Cormac MacCarthy the Strong, builder of Blarney Castle, one day saved an old woman from drowning. She was tremendously gratified and promised to give Cormac a golden tongue with wonderful power to influence everybody who heard it; but in order to possess this, she said, he must kiss a particular stone in the parapet of Blarney Castle, five feet below the top. The feat was dangerous, but Cormac accomplished it, immediately coming into possession of the promised gift. Since that time everybody who has visited the old ruin wants to kiss the same stone.”

“You bet I will,” John announced, with determination.

Mrs. Pitt did not reply; she had dreaded their visit to Blarney for this very reason. Betty remarked slyly that she didn't believe her brother needed the gift.

When they had traveled several miles of the pretty road through the green valley of the Lee, their driver, who had been silent for some time, swung around in his seat, and, pointing with his whip, said:

“ That's where Sir John Coldthurst lives, in that old tower amongst thim trees, beyant. It's his honor that owns Blarney Castle, milady. Him and another of the genthry, they was after discussing wan while how deep was Blarney Lake. They was always a-disagreeing till they decided they'd sind down two divers. They done so, themselves a-standing near the lake, a-watching. They kept a-waiting and watching, but never did they see thim divers come up. And eight weeks after, 'twas, milady, Sir John he had a letther from thim, and they was in Australia! Now, did yez iver hear the like o' that? ”

John expressed his astonishment by a whistle, and the others were properly impressed by the wondrous tale. The driver was evidently ready to tell more stories, but a motor-car just then came in sight and made it necessary for him to give his entire attention to his horse.

“ This neighborhood is full of descendants

of the MacCarthy who built the castle," Mrs. Pitt told them. "Each believes that the castle belongs to him and confidently expects the demesne to come back one day into the hands of the family that was forced to forfeit it. A MacCarthy may be plowing a field under the shadow of his ancestral castle, but he never loses his pride or his feeling of rightful possessor."

Leaving their car at a tiny railway station, they crossed the tracks and took a path through the woods, near a little stream. In a few moments they found themselves in an open field, and there rose ruined Blarney Castle.

Two of the children promptly took snapshots of it, for the more familiar a thing is the better most of us love it. And from this side the high keep of Blarney is certainly picturesque enough!

"Come on," shouted John; "I'm for climbing to the top!"

He was off at a run, the others slowly following. Skirting the crumbling walls of later additions to the castle, they entered the keep, always the oldest portion of a castle and that which lasts the longest. They lost their breath climbing the winding stairs, steep and uneven, but at last they reached the top.

Betty gave a little scream: "Oh, there's somebody doing it now! It isn't John, is it?"



“SHURE, 'N' HEV YEZ NEVER HEARD A PERSON TALK, BELIKE,
WHAT'S KISSED THE BLARNEY STONE ?”—Page 108.

It was not John, not yet. He and Philip were close spectators, however, Philip placidly interested, John hugely enjoying it and impatient to be at it himself. No sooner had the tourist righted himself, flushed and panting, than John took a step forward.

“I’m next,” said he; “somebody hold my feet!”

Some men laughed and good-naturedly offered to assist. Betty and Mrs. Pitt said nothing, well knowing how useless it would be to remonstrate. So John took off his cap and lay on his back, his head towards an opening in the floor next the parapet. With a man holding each foot, he then grasped an iron bar put there for this purpose. Swinging his head down under the parapet, he reached up and just managed to kiss the outer face of the famous stone.

It sounds easy, and indeed it was all over in a moment. John was lithe and strong, so he easily pulled himself back, standing before them, triumphant and happy.

“It’s a cinch!” he cried, glancing at his audience and then at Philip. “Going to try it? Gee, but you’re a long way from the ground when you look down!”

Betty had not looked down, but she did now and shuddered.

"Smooth your hair, John, and put on your cap," she said sternly.

"Call those chaps back; I'm good for it," said Philip, but his mother objected. One adventurer was enough, she thought.

Once the stone fell, but it was promptly restored to its position and secured by iron bars. On it is a Latin inscription, "Cormac Macarthy Fortis Me Fieri Fecit, A.D. 1446." The popular translation reads:

"Cormac Macarthy, bould as bricks,
Made me in Fourteen Forty-six."

There are people who insist that this is not the original Blarney Stone at all. Others think the stone genuine, but hold that it has been removed from its original position. But one who kisses the stone scoffs at all doubts and questionings. John, for example, was quite satisfied that he had kissed the one, only, and original Blarney Stone, and secretly waited for words of eloquence to pour from his mouth.

In their excitement they almost forgot to admire the views of the surrounding country, including the "groves of Blarney," which "are so charming" both according to the song and in reality, and Blarney Lake in which the family treasure is sunk, never to be restored until a MacCarthy is once more lord of the demesne. Strange things, they say, happen on

the shores of this lake. There are countless fairy rings, which the privileged may see in the grass, the kind that no amount of plowing will destroy; and here, in the summer dawn, come forth enchanted cows, snow-white and very beautiful.

Having descended the spiral stairs, now and then with some difficulty making room for another visitor to pass upwards, they explored the castle's ruined kitchen and banqueting hall. All too soon they had to return to the waiting car. They drove back to the city by the other bank of the river, and had gone more than half-way when Betty suddenly cried out:

“ Why, John, you talk exactly the same, even if you did kiss the Blarney Stone! ”

CHAPTER NINE

SEEING YOUGHAL AND THE RIVER BLACKWATER

“IRELAND’S a hard nut to crack, and they haven’t finished it yet!” said the little gray-haired lady who shared their compartment in the Youghal train, proceeding to tell Mrs. Pitt and the rest what she meant by this discouraging statement about her native land.

“Ah, my dear, it’s a sweet land. I know that well, now that I’ve left it to live in England, at Cheltenham, dear, and can only come back now and then to pay visits. Just look there!” she exclaimed, glancing out the window at an especially picturesque village. “Isn’t it sweetly pretty? I know all this country so well, dear, for I lived not far from Youghal,—where you’re going, I suppose. I love this land, and I know, too, what troubles its people have had.”

She spoke of potatoes having been the mainstay of Ireland since Sir Walter Raleigh had first planted them in his garden at Youghal, more than two hundred years ago. Many persons question whether the devotion of the Irish to the potato may not have done them more

harm than good. Their dependence has been placed almost wholly upon this one crop, and, now and again, when the terrible blight has swept the potato fields, famine has followed and such suffering as we who always have plenty to eat cannot appreciate.

“Seems bad enough to have nothing but potatoes to eat,” remarked John.

The most dreadful of all Ireland's famines was in 1846 and 1847. So many died of fevers at the poorhouses that, supported by the government, a Mr. Trench offered the starving people free passage to America. Two hundred were taken to Cork each week. Large numbers left their native land. Mr. Trench had offered work, at fair wages, to those who preferred that to leaving their homes, but most of them were too weak to accomplish much. Thus the experiment failed, and emigration was the only solution.

“And now they're all policemen and mayors in America,” put in John.

The Irish lady laughed. “The Irish do get on marvelously in your country,” she said. “That is Killeagh station we are just passing,” she pointed out. “Near here they had land disturbances not long since. The Ponsonbys, a great family, owned many thousands of acres. Their income used to be as much as from £10,000 to £20,000 a year! Then these land

troubles began; certain peasants refused to pay rents, and so other excellent farmers were sent down from Belfast. But the former tenants harassed them, forced them to join the Land League, and forbade their paying rents. Terrible times followed; houses were unroofed or burned and men were attacked in the fields. The overseer had to ride about on horseback so that he could see over the hedges and discover if there were men lurking there to attack him. At last the Ponsonbys grew so poor that they were obliged to leave their home and go into lodgings in London. I remember there were two daughters in the family, lovely ladies. At first they had two rooms, and then they could afford only one. Former tenants, afraid to pay rent openly, sent money in secret to help the family. There were many such cases. Now the estates are being divided up among small farmers. Many young men, when they come into their estates, have nothing; scores of ladies of former wealth and position have actually had to go into the workhouses. The sufferings have not been wholly on the workingman's side. So, I say Ireland's a hard nut to crack and they're not finished with her yet. Here we are at Youghal. Say you've met me when you're at St. Mary's Church, my dear; I'm well known there. My name is Smith."

The kind lady in the old-fashioned bonnet

and jet-trimmed mantle bustled away with friends, while Mrs. Pitt and her party walked along the road which leads towards the town. A strong wind from the sea prevented them from making rapid headway, but at last they had passed the long row of villas and lodgings and had entered the one long street of Youghal.

“What’s this?” inquired Barbara. “See the little gate with a bell, and roses growing over the wall. Oh, is it the convent where they make lace?”

For answer her mother rang the bell at the porter’s gate.

“I’ll buy some cuffs and a collar—real Irish—for my new dress,” announced Betty. “Mother said I might; it won’t cost as much as at home.”

A gentle sister met them at the door of the Presentation Convent and conducted them through several long rooms, where women and girls were making lace. Sometimes she called a worker forward. One poor girl, a little older than Betty, with a crooked back and a wan face, held out an exquisite veil of point lace; it was soon to be worn by a rich London bride, she told them. When Betty had selected her collar and cuffs and Mrs. Pitt had made a few purchases, they thanked the black-gowned sister and left the convent by the little gate.

“The lace is beautiful,” Betty reflected,

"but they squint so, and hold it too close to their eyes. Some of them look white and thin; I'm afraid they get very tired of making lace."

"Yes, but they must earn money, you know, and at least the crippled ones could not do it in any other way. The sisters are kind to them, teaching them and paying them well, and the convent is a more comfortable place in which to work than their houses would be. It's quite true, though, that their eyes often give out."

Youghal's main street has several hotels, many little shops, a school in an ancient town hall, and a picturesque arched clock gateway. The street is narrow and was filled by two-wheeled butchers' carts, pony chaises in which ladies had driven into town from their country places, bicycles, and an occasional motor-car occupying more than its share of space. On they strolled, walking in the street when the sidewalks were overcrowded by ragged children. At last they turned to the left, up a steep alley which ended at the gate of ancient St. Mary's Church.

They entered by a low door at one side of the gate, and were walking towards the church when an exclamation from John made them stop. He was standing by the gate, his back towards the others.

"Oh, John, have you cut yourself with that

awful knife you're always playing with?" called his sister, running towards him.

"No, hang it! Worse than that! It's my camera. I dropped it, and now the thing won't go. Bother, Betty! Let a fellow alone, will you? How could I help it if the strap slipped off my shoulder?"

The beloved camera was a little bent, but Mrs. Pitt thought the damage was not serious. She told John to go back to a photographer in the High Street to see if it could be fixed. Philip would go with him. Meanwhile the others sat upon flat gravestones in the silent, green old churchyard, enjoying the delightful picture made by the church amid the great trees, against the background of a steep bank dotted with tombs. At the top of the bank is a part of the old town wall of Youghal, its stones overgrown with moss and vines. There is peace and an indescribable charm about the precincts.

Betty, who had been looking up at the lovely tracery of the east window, at last sighed deeply. "It's so beautiful," she said. "Is it really as old as it feels, Mrs. Pitt?"

"How old do you feel that it is?"

"Ages and ages."

"Well, the transept is known as the oldest building with a roof in Ireland. Some of the pillars, supporting the arches, rest on the lids

of stone coffins of the eighth or ninth century. Probably the architecture is chiefly of the thirteenth century, though, of course, there have been restorations. Then, there's a half-broken Norman arch to which no one attempts to attach a date. But you shall see it for yourselves. Here come the boys. Well, John, what success? "

" I'll show you. Here, I'll take you sitting on that moldy old stone." Snap and wind. " That's all right."

Then they went into the church.

The stained glass of St. Mary's east window is very fine, letting in the light upon the heavy beams of the ceiling, beams of black Irish oak. Near the oaken pulpit is a bit of ancient tiling, said to be a thousand years old; two of the tombs are of equal age; one of them, the boys discovered with great interest, is said to be that of a warrior who fought with Strongbow. An old oak door, much chipped and worn, which leads into the Boyle chapel, has been in place for at least a thousand years.

" There's himself and all the Boyle kids," said John, as they came in sight of the huge, elaborate monument which the first Earl of Cork designed for himself. His own figure is in the center; a first wife is pictured on his left with her one child at her feet; on the earl's right kneels his second wife, the effigies of her

numerous children extending across the bottom of the tomb.

“ They wanted to give us the whole family history, didn’t they? ” suggested Barbara.

“ Here’s the tomb of that amazing Countess of Desmond, who lived to be one hundred and forty years old, only dying then because of a chance fall from a tree into which she had climbed to gather nuts. She lived at Dromana, a place we shall pass this afternoon when we are on the river.”

“ Sh-sh,” warned Mrs. Pitt, as the children’s loud laughter echoed through the churchyard and seemed to mock at the tombs.

“ The lady in the train told me that not long ago some ancient coffins of old Munster kings were found in St. Mary’s crypt. The story goes that dazzling jewels were discovered, too, but that these and the verger vanished the same night, never to return.”

“ I wonder if that’s true,” commented Barbara.

Betty had climbed with John to the top of the city wall, and they were shouting the news that they could see the blue sea and the boats. Philip started after them, but turned when he heard the name Sir Walter Raleigh.

Myrtle Grove, the charming Elizabethan manor house in which Raleigh lived, stands close by St. Mary’s Church; in fact, it is

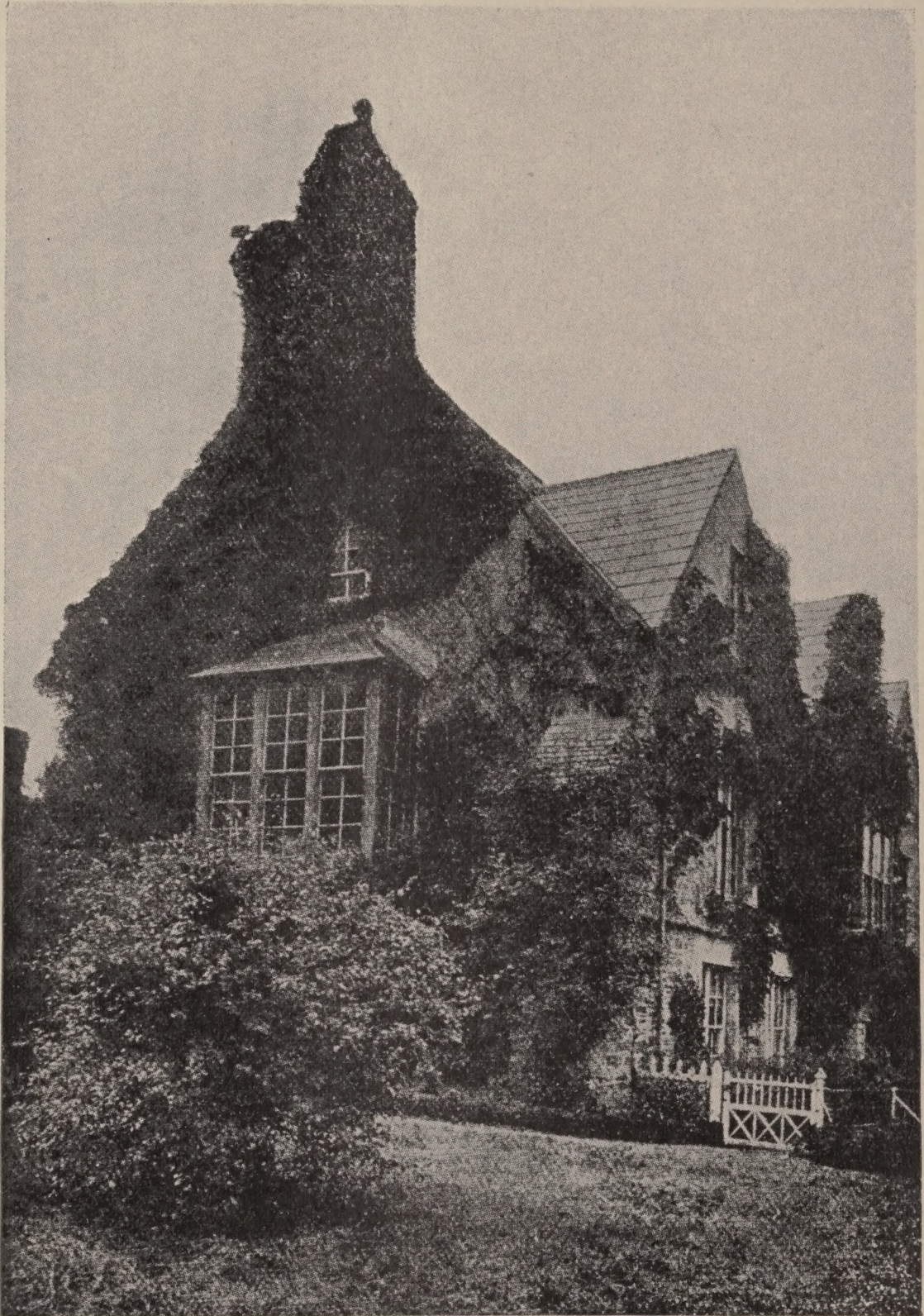
thought once to have been the residence of church dignitaries. Now the old place, rich in associations of Raleigh and his friend, Edmund Spenser, is the private property of Sir Henry Blake, formerly the English Governor of Hong Kong. Mrs. Pitt rang the bell in the brick wall and for some minutes they stood there, expectant. When a servant, opening the door a crack, coldly informed them that no visitors were received at Myrtle Grove, they were too startled to speak. The door closed and there they stood, shut out from the place they had come to Youghal chiefly to see.

“ Oh, I say, not to see Raleigh's place! That's too bad, you know. Mother, can't you do something? ”

If Philip ever gave way to tears he was near it now. Betty added dolefully:

“ I wanted to see Myrtle Grove almost more than anything else. I've liked Walter Raleigh ever since I was little and thought his name was ' Salt Water Rawlly. ' ”

Mrs. Pitt said nothing, but she wore a determined air that it was good to see. Taking a card from her handbag, she wrote something on it and rang the bell a second time. The children held their breath. They never knew what message the card bore, but soon the door swung wide open and there was Lady Blake inviting them to come in. She was a tall, pleasant



"I WANTED TO SEE MYRTLE GROVE ALMOST MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE."—*Page 122.*

person and wore sensible gardening clothes.

“How do you do?” she said to Mrs. Pitt, leading the way towards the house, its red bricks and gables covered with vines, its casement windows swung hospitably open. She ignored the children, but they were too happy to care.

“They say that Raleigh came to Ireland in 1579, at the head of some troops which put down one of the ever-rebellious Earls of Desmond,” Lady Blake said presently. “Raleigh was brave and handsome, you know, and they gave him a grant of land on which this house was probably standing. Raleigh lived here for a few years, was even Mayor of Youghal. Some books say that Spenser was here often; we have a bedchamber called ‘Spenser’s Chamber.’ But how true the tradition is, I can’t say, I’m sure. Shall we go in now?”

The massive front door with its heart-shaped brass keyhole opens into a low vestibule. They followed Lady Blake up the carpeted stairs and into rooms all paneled alike in black oak, having lovely latticed windows, set in thick, substantial walls, and wonderfully carved oak mantels with delightful cupboards at the side. In a glass cabinet is preserved the famous pipe from which Raleigh smoked the hitherto unknown tobacco. John longed to ask if he could put the pipe in his mouth for a second, but

Betty quickly pulled him away. In Raleigh's and Spenser's bedrooms are grand old beds; everywhere are beautiful things, for which the fine old Elizabethan dwelling furnishes just the right setting.

"Raleigh might have been here only yesterday!" said Mrs. Pitt, as she looked around.

"Yes," remarked Betty, as she went in timidly; "don't you feel as if it was the sixteenth century, really, instead of the twentieth?"

The other children looked at Betty with admiration. They had not dared to speak to this august possessor of Raleigh's treasures. Lady Blake smiled down indulgently at Betty, but she assured her that she felt "quite modern."

In front of the house is a wide, graveled court, beyond which are four aged yew trees, their branches so intertwined as to make a tiny arbor.

"Shoo!" said Lady Blake to the peacocks that were strutting there.

"Here," she told her guests, "beneath these trees, Sir Walter probably smoked his pipe and dreamed of future voyages and adventures."

A servant just then summoned her to the house and she hurried away, first giving them permission to explore the gardens as long as they chose.

"She's a brick!" burst out John, as soon as their hostess had vanished indoors.

“ Yes, but I wish she hadn’t frightened those darling peacocks away. You don’t see them anywhere, do you? ” said Barbara.

Going through an arch in the green hedge, they found an old-fashioned garden, the inclosure in which Raleigh had first planted the potatoes and tobacco brought from distant Virginia. There are several other gardens and terraces, and Lady Blake’s aviary, but John’s watch reminded them that the steamer for the Blackwater trip would leave in twenty minutes.

Everybody was so hungry that it was not until after they had had some luncheon on the deck that they began to appreciate the scenery of the Blackwater, the “ Irish Rhine.” There were but few other passengers and they found it very pleasant to sit there, quiet and content, while their little boat glided on. Sometimes the banks of the river are heavily wooded, sometimes bordered by fertile fields; again, there are mountains and ruined castles high upon promontories which faintly suggest the Rhine. The country has varied historical associations, too; here with the ever-youthful Countess of Desmond, there with Raleigh, and again with Strongbow or Cromwell.

At Cappoquin, seventeen miles from Youghal, the steamer stops. Carriages were waiting to carry visitors to Mount Melleray, the monas-

tery of some Irish monks, at the foot of the Knockmealdown Mountains.

"They can't 'knock me all down,'" announced John, chuckling at his own wit.

Mrs. Pitt ordered their jarvey to drive them to Lismore Castle, not many miles away.

"Why, it's even nicer than Warwick Castle!" exclaimed Betty, as they paused, looking up at the Duke of Devonshire's beautiful castle of Lismore, high on a wooded bluff above the Blackwater, spanned at that point by an ancient bridge.

"Ripping!" agreed John. "Here, wait till I snap it!"

"I didn't know there was such a castle in Ireland," said Philip, greatly impressed with the lofty turrets, towers and battlements, the wide courts, and well-kept gardens.

At the porter's lodge they were turned away, with the information that the Duke and his family were in residence and no visitors were admitted.

"Stuffy of him to keep everybody out," grumbled John.

"Well, you know the Duke's one of the first men in the United Kingdom," Philip retorted. "Really, you can't expect him to let in everybody who comes along."

John merely sniffed, and, like the others, tried to get a glimpse of the main courtyard

in the center of which is a beautiful spreading tree. Turning, they walked down the over-arched drive, in the twilight, the strange clay soil of Lismore slipping beneath their feet. Just as they went through the outer gate, a motor-car came towards them, carrying a gentleman in rough tweeds, who talked merrily with a boy and girl, all bending over fishing tackle.

“ Wasn’t that the Duke? ” Mrs. Pitt asked of a man who had dropped his broom to touch his cap as the car passed.

“ Yes, my lady, the Duke and his children.”

CHAPTER TEN

IN THE SHOWERY SOUTH OF IRELAND

“ Now, young sir, if ye’ll just lave everythin’ to the head porter, wherever ye be goin’, ye’ll be all right; but, if ye git ter sthravagin’ round like this, ye’ll be always in throuble.”

Florrie’s voice became commanding. There was plainly nothing more to be said, yet John was unconvinced. It was within ten minutes of starting time for the Bantry train, and the station omnibus was not yet at the Imperial Hotel door. Of course they would lose the train which it was most important that they should make; but John, having unwisely attempted to berate Florrie, only called forth the above remarks, without hurrying matters in the least. Nobody else seemed at all disturbed by the delay. The luggage had been brought down; Mrs. Pitt and Philip were studying a map on the wall, near the door; Betty and Barbara, as usual, were taking advantage of a spare moment to send off picture post-cards. John need not have been ruffled, for they easily caught their train, which started about twenty minutes

later than schedule time. Herein lies a moral for the traveler in Ireland.

The train ambled along through the country which Thackeray from his coach pronounced "bare and ragged looking, but yet green and pretty"; sometimes they stopped at little stations where barefooted women and children gazed at them from the platforms. A few of the women wore long cloaks with hoods, made of good blue or black cloth.

"Oh, it must be market day!" said Betty, upon arrival at Bantry that noon. "See all the people in the streets, and look at them squatting in the doorways with their baskets of green apples. What a lot of them wear the long cloaks here!"

Mrs. Pitt let the children wander through Bantry's muddy, squalid streets, and investigate the chattering crowds and braying donkeys, while she inquired about the Glengariff steamer.

"We've had a narrow escape," she exclaimed, as she overtook them. "They tell me that so early in the season as this the steamer runs only twice a week,—and Florrie assured me it went every day! Fancy! Well, most luckily for us it does go this afternoon. But to think that we might have had to stay the night at Bantry!"

After luncheon they had yet an hour before

the departure of the boat, plenty of time for a walk out beyond the town. A road skirts the bay, very pretty with its islands and a rocking yacht or two, beyond which they saw something lying long and gray on the water.

John and Philip did not need to look more than once. "Warships!" they cried.

"Quite so!" replied Mrs. Pitt. "I'm told they're at target practice here.

"On a clear day the Killarney Mountains can be seen," she continued, hugging a high demesne wall to get out of the way of a peasant and her cow. "There are Mangerton and Macgillicuddy's Reeks, you know. Those mountains which we see, over Whiddy Island and its fortifications, are the Caha Mountains near Glengarriff, Sugar Loaf and Hungry Hill among them. Up among those peaks, there are three hundred and sixty-five lakes, some saint having prayed for a lake to supply water every day in the year. Somewhere about there's a small lake the islands of which have the power, one day in each year, to dance about and change places. As for Hungry Hill, it was at the foot of it that Daniel O'Rourke lived, the youth who rode on an eagle's back to the moon, where he sat and talked with the 'man' himself, and tumbled off to be towed along by some flying geese that finally dropped him into the sea, where he met a whale that . . . And nobody

was ever sure whether it was because Daniel had taken a drop too much on Lady Day, or had only fallen asleep under the walls of old Carrigaphooka Castle. You must read it all this evening in my copy of Croker's 'Legends of the South of Ireland.' Come, Barbara, it's time for the boat."

In the point of rain, the southwest of Ireland tries to outdo all other sections, generally succeeding. So Mrs. Pitt and the girls viewed the scenery and even the majestic battleships from under umbrellas dripping with heavy Irish mist. Great clouds shifted over the mountain peaks, the water of the bay roughened, and a cold wind blew in their faces. As they neared the inner harbor, so inclosed as to resemble a lake, they passed several more warships. When a cannon ball went hissing across the waves, following a loud explosion, John was beside himself with excitement. All he asked was a chance to visit one of the ships.

By the time they had landed in the little cove of Glengarriff and had tramped through the mud to pretty Eccles Hotel, near the beach, hard rain was descending and clouds had shut in on all sides. The hotel, with its stone floors and huge rooms, was depressingly cold and empty; Mrs. Pitt ordered a fire built at once and, sitting before it, they drank their tea. The afternoon and evening were necessarily spent

within doors. Rain dripped off the hotel roof and soaked the grass and the flowers; the wind whipped the branches of the trees, and tossed the boats moored near shore. Now and then a huddled rider dashed along the road in front of the hotel, his garments streaming. But for the most part there was dead silence, within and without.

It was fortunate that the Eccles Hotel had a good library, for there was still much rain the following morning and only the boys were allowed to go out, scurrying up the road to the cluster of cottages which make up the town of Glengariff. About noon the rain suddenly ceased, and within an hour the sun shone brightly.

“It’s too wet to walk,” said Mrs. Pitt, “but we’ll go for a drive to Cromwell’s Bridge, and through the woods to Lord Bantry’s shooting-lodge. Get on your warm coats, children; we’ll take two umbrellas.”

When they started the mists were clearing away, showing the sparkling water. Leaving it behind, they drove through the village and into the woods. Here birds were singing among the wet leaves of the trees, and the roads were slippery with mud. The forests about Glengariff have the wonderful silvery freshness which is found in all delightful Irish woodlands. They are old—in fact, hoary with age—

and yet there is in them all that is dainty and young, ferns and wild flowers.

“There’s Cromwell’s Bridge,” said Barbara, when they came to the rushing little Proudley River, swollen by much rain. “Yes, it has two whole arches and a broken one, just like the post-cards.”

“What was Cromwell doing here, anyhow? Could he be everywhere at once? When you study English history, he’s always in England; when you come to Ireland, he’s here, too.”

“He does seem to have been ever present, Betty,” agreed Mrs. Pitt. “I suppose such characters always are. History fails to tell us his business at Glengarriff, but legend comes to the rescue and says he was on a visit to the O’Sullivans, who owned this part of the country. Cromwell had trouble in crossing this river with his men, and he told the natives that, if they didn’t build him a bridge at once, he would hang one man for every hour’s delay. The bridge was finished in forty-eight hours.”

“You bet it was!” cried John. “He could make ’em hump.”

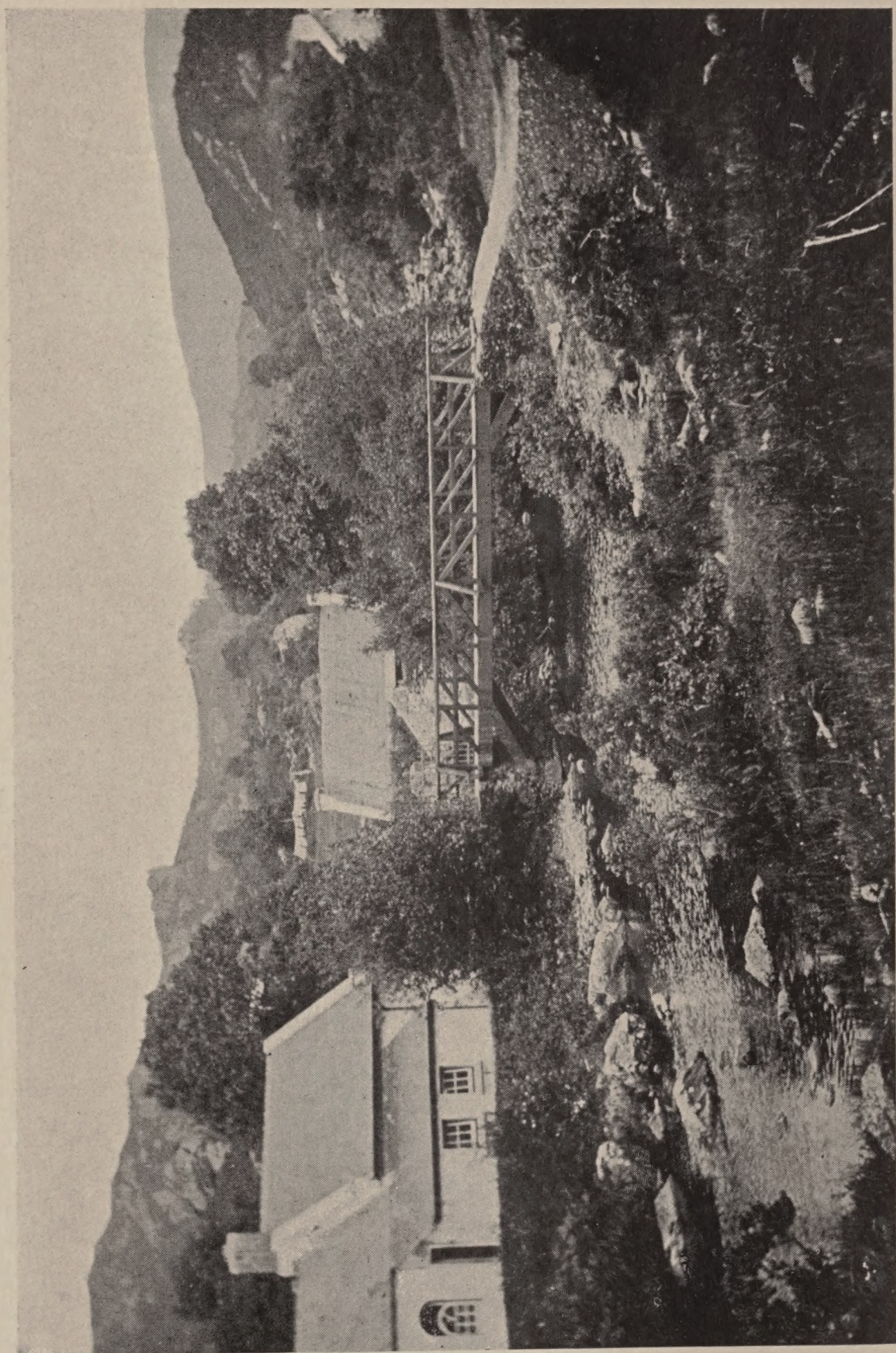
Lord Bantry, owner of many acres of land about Glengarriff, built his shooting-lodge on a knoll in a green valley, shut in on one side by dense woods, on the other by grim mountains with rocky sides. The children were

charmed with the house, a kind of Swiss chalet, having a steep roof and an upper balcony; all about are trees and shrubs, great rhododendrons almost covering some of the lower windows. They peeped in and saw many trophies of the chase.

Quite different were the huts they saw later on, as they drove over the hillsides above the shores of the bay and the village of Glengarriff. This was the most ghastly poverty they had yet seen in Ireland.

"The houses are just like those 'black huts' they had in the Highland Village at the Glasgow Exhibition," Betty said, shuddering. "They're too awful! I can't look!"

Dropped down in any little ravine or overhanging a rushing stream, these thatched mud huts seem unfit for human beings. It is sometimes impossible to recognize which shack is house and which shed, the animals entering one quite as naturally as the other. Children played in the miry yards among the few family possessions, a handful of chickens, a pig, and by rare good fortune, a donkey. Tousled women filled the doorways, shading their eyes to peer at the passing strangers, their position making it mercifully impossible to see the black, windowless, smoke-filled interiors. Among the stones were dug pitiable bits of potato patches; and these are all the people have, unless one



DROPPED DOWN IN ANY LITTLE RAVINE, OR OVERHANGING A RUSHING STREAM, THESE THATCHED
MUD HUTS.—*Page 134.*

counts the view, a glorious one overlooking the bay, wooded hills, and mountain peaks beyond. But it is doubtful whether the scenery affords much consolation to these poor, struggling peasants. Every one reads about the heart-rending poverty of the Irish. Here it was in truth.

The jaunting-car wound its way down the steep road to the village, and left its passengers at the hotel once more; they felt disinclined for much conversation, looking quietly out over the island-dotted bay, its waters opal under the setting sun. From time to time target practice from the battleships reverberated, rattling the hotel windows in their frames. It was a lovely evening, and they sat spellbound upon the veranda until the head waiter came with friendly warning of the hour for dinner.

At ten o'clock the next morning two outside-cars were in readiness to take them over the mountains, twenty-four miles to Kenmare. To carry five passengers and their luggage over this steep road was far too much for one horse, so for that day the party was divided. Mrs. Pitt, Betty, and Philip led the way, and behind came John and Barbara, sitting together on one side, while all the suit-cases and handbags were strapped to the other seat. And so they climbed slowly up the stony roads behind Glengarriff, up, up into the mountains; and from

the curving roads they looked back over the valley they had just left, the bay beyond, and the far mountains of County Cork.

"I've used every adjective I know," sighed Betty; "now I'm just going to look and not talk at all. What's the use?"

No one had any answer to this question and it was a quiet party which drove on for several hours until, at the highest point of the pass, a solitary hut was reached. As the drivers jumped down and disappeared inside the cabin, the two boys scrambled down, too, buying several bottles of ginger beer for the refreshment of Mrs. Pitt and the girls.

"Hello! here's a tunnel, right under the mountain. It's black, isn't it? Come along, Philip; we'll walk it. What do you say?"

Emerging at the further end of the damp tunnel, they were in County Kerry, and before them rose just as many mountains as they had left behind in County Cork. Down the winding road they went, sometimes meeting frightened sheep, sometimes groups of small, black Kerry cattle.

"No wonder they're thin," Philip reflected; "there's nothing for them to eat but stones."

"Yes, the soil is very poor up here in the mountains," said his mother. "There's an old saying that 'a Kerry cow never looks up

at a passing stranger for fear it would lose the bite.' ”

“ Yesterday I read a story about the first cow in Ireland,” remarked Betty. “ In Mr. Jeremiah Curtin’s book there are two or three stories about her. In one of them men had an awfully hard time following her about, but she gave plenty of milk to everybody until an old woman once milked her into a sieve and made the river all milky. Then the cow—Glas Gainach was her name—went away over the water to Spain, where she came from. In another place it says that the rich in Ireland tried to take all her milk, so she went up into the air and they never saw her again.”

“ H’m,” said John, “ s’pose that’s what made the milky way.”

“ Since then there’s never been enough milk for poor people, because it all has to come from common cows,” continued Betty, ignoring John’s comment.

At last they were in the valley and began to pass an occasional cottage, a lonely school-house or a chapel. Towards the middle of the afternoon they crossed a broad river and were in the town of Kenmare. Into the bay of this same name the Milesians first sailed, wonderful early settlers of Ireland. From there they marched straight to Tara Hill. And they say that everybody who bears a name beginning

with an "O" or a "Mac" is descended from this "high Milesian race."

Mrs. Pitt directed the drivers to the railway station, where their luggage was left and inquiries made about trains.

Finding that there would be no Killarney train for three hours, they had tea at the Southern Hotel, after which they walked about this town, always popular with tourists because of its fine trout-fishing and its golfing. The fishing is done six miles below the town, so John could not take that in; but he and Philip cast a critical eye over the links, while the others inspected the lace at the convent of Poor Clares.

As might have been expected, the Killarney train did not start on time; the ticket agent did not arrive to sell Mrs. Pitt her tickets until twenty minutes after the train should have been on its way. It was, therefore, growing dark when they at last left Kenmare. Just before they started a guard put lighted lamps in through the roof of the coach.

"Well, what do you know about that!" exclaimed John.

Men and women were walking homewards across the fields, and blue peat smoke puffed from the cottage chimneys. The very mountains seemed to be veiled in this same blue haze. At length they came in sight of Mac-

gillicuddy's Reeks, just as the daylight was almost gone. In answer to the children's questions regarding this strange name, Mrs. Pitt told the following legend:

“There was once a Mr. Macgillicuddy who owned estates in this part of Ireland,” she said. “He was invited to visit some friends in England, and when he set out he took with him an exceedingly patriotic, not always truthful, Irish servant of his. It seems that the English gentleman owned much meadow land and was very proud of his haystacks (or ricks); it was therefore natural that in the servants' hall there was also much talk of the stackyard. Paddy was early taken there, but he would never admit that things English compared with corresponding things in Ireland; so he was quite indifferent, merely saying, ‘It's a nice bit o' grass you've brought home here for present use; now let us have a peep at the ricks.’ When assured that he was even then viewing the Englishman's ricks, he answered that there was only enough hay there to make bands for thatching his master's great ricks in Ireland.

“Now when the Englishman returned his Irish friend's visit, in the following year, the first thing which his servant demanded was a sight of the Irish haystacks. The amiable Irish servant was only too happy to comply with this request, but could not be free for it until even-

ing, he said. In the gray twilight, then, he led the Englishman to where he could see the high mountains in the distance. 'There are *our* ricks,' said the Irishman. And ever since, those mountains have been called Macgillicuddy's Reeks!''

CHAPTER ELEVEN

SEEING KILLARNEY

“ BUT how could the O'Donoghue live at the bottom of a lake? ” persisted Barbara.

“ Sure he could! ” said John. “ Couldn't be any wetter down there than it is here this minute! ”

They were walking across the sodden paths and soaked lawns of Lord Kenmare's demesne, on their way from the Royal Victoria Hotel to Ross Castle. One whole day and part of the second they had restlessly kept within doors, hoping for fine weather; not yet had Killarney treated them to a glimpse of her mountains or even of “ Fair Innisfallen,” which island lay directly opposite the hotel.

It was on their second morning that they overheard a dialogue between two English gentlemen:

“ Beastly weather! We'll not get far to-day. The thought of those bouncing trout out in the lake makes me fairly—— Oh, hello, Jim! You down? I say, old chap, why do you come to Killarney when she always treats you like this? ”

“ Oh, I say now, why do you come, then? You’ve been here every spring for fifteen years. So’ve I! We depend on it; it’s like our whisky and sodas or our morning baths. You know that. So do I! When there’s rain and fog like this, we’ve the devil to pay; but when Killarney smiles—— Well, Killarney’s Killarney; that’s all. Ah, Thomas, trout and bacon and eggs, as usual.”

Mrs. Pitt and the rest decided that this was the proper attitude and that they would complain no more. As a reward they found the fog a degree less dense after luncheon, and they started for a walk.

There have been many attempts to describe wet weather in Ireland, but one must himself experience the long succession of rainy days in the south to understand how thoroughly soaked everything can be. On they went across the fields and meadows of which Lord Kenmare’s big house commands a view, under the beautiful great trees, weighted with rain-soaked leaves. It is impossible to say too much in praise of these wonderful trees: yew, oak, wild apple, hazel, birch, holly with shining green leaves, and mountain ash with red berries, and, brightest of all, the lovely arbutus. Under them, in the shade, grow pale yellow primroses, clumps and clumps of them.

When they came to picturesque Ross Castle,

on a peninsula in the Upper Lake, the sun glinting upon its vine-covered keep, Mrs. Pitt told them about the great O'Donoghue.

“ He was chief of this part of Kerry, and his castle stood in the center of the lovely valley where the three lakes of Killarney now are,—the lakes were called Loch Lene, after the goldsmith, ‘ Lene of the Many Hammers,’ who ‘ here by the lake wrought, surrounded by rainbows and showers of fiery dew.’ As at Loch Awe in Scotland, you remember, some one forgot to replace the cover on an enchanted well, and the water poured into the valley and flooded it. Just as a sentinel, on a turret of the castle, shouted, ‘ All’s well!’ the water rose above his chin. The O'Donoghue was not drowned, however, nor were the lords and ladies of his court. They still live in the castle under the water. It is said that sometimes peasants have been taken down to share the chief’s hospitality; occasionally one still meets a man who will tell startling tales of his grandfather’s experiences in the castle under the water. Although the chief seems less fond of entertaining than formerly, he comes up at certain times to take the air upon his white horse. Every May Day he rides in the early morning, and sometimes he is seen at other seasons. People are always on the watch for him at dawn, and luck is with him who sees the big warrior in armor, seated

on his white steed and preceded by dancing maidens strewing flowers."

John and Philip had already climbed the stone stair of the castle and, the others following, they wandered among the ruined walls and finally stood upon the top of its battlemented tower. Ross Castle was built by an early O'Donoghue chief, and most of the legends of the famous O'Donoghue have been derived from that connected with this castle. Even yet visitors may see the identical window from which the chief leaped with his horse, when he exchanged his fair possessions on earth for a kingdom under the lake. In another legend we are told that the chieftain had power to assume all kinds of shapes. His wife, a lady of much curiosity, wanting to learn if this power were really his, asked him one day for a proof. He agreed to give it on condition that she would promise not to be frightened, no matter how horrible he might look. In spite of her promise, she became so alarmed that she gave a loud shriek, at which her husband leaped from the castle window into the lake. There he will live until the horse's silver shoes are worn out by his annual rides.

"You'd think he'd come to earth more than once a year," reasoned Betty, "for he still has a stable for his horses, a prison, a library, a pigeon-house, a cellar, a broom, a pulpit, and

—what else? The porter at the hotel said I could see all these things, but, of course, they're not real, only rocks."

"Yez can see the great O'Donoghue's horse, ma'am, if ye'll just be steppin' into a dacent boat the likes o' mine, here. Shure it's meself and this gossoon as could be rowin' yez out to Innisfallen, too. Shure it's a fine evenin' entirely."

As the sky looked promising, and even the mountains were beginning to come forth, wrapped in their purple veils, Mrs. Pitt ventured to engage the boatman and to marshal her party into the boat. At first they inspected certain of the rocks in this, the Lower Lake, the curious formations usually suggesting some possession of the O'Donoghue. The horse is perhaps the most realistic, though John was most scornful of it.

"He'd fall to pieces like the 'Wonderful One-Horse Shay,' if a knight in armor ever sat upon him!"

"Do you know," broke in Philip suddenly, "I think there's a storm coming, Mother. Better have the boatman take us to the hotel."

Mrs. Pitt looked up to see heavy clouds fast gathering below the mountains, and she noticed that a stiff wind was blowing. But the boatman insisted on taking them to Innisfallen, and was firm in his assurances of safety. Mrs.

Pitt was sitting so that she saw Ross Castle, back in the pale sunshine; but Barbara and Betty, seeing the big waves farther out in the lake, sat closer together and held each other's hands. When they came out into the open lake, the wind struck them full force and their boat became a very fragile thing. In silence they peered through the slanting rain at the tiny beach of Innisfallen Island. John vented his feelings in a low whistle and turned down the brim of his cap so the water would not run down his neck. By breathless pulling and steadying, the men at last brought the boat safely to the island and they all jumped ashore gladly.

"My word!" cried Mrs. Pitt, whose face had lost its color; "we'll have to spend the night here if the wind doesn't go down. There have been accidents on Killarney Lakes,—but we won't talk of them."

With the wild wind in their ears, the trees and lovely dells of Innisfallen looked ghostly instead of dainty and fairylike, as the poem describes them. The ruins of the abbey, founded in the seventh century by the leper, St. Finian, and those of an even more ancient chapel, covered with ivy, did not have their usual charm. They all forgot how holy was the ground of the island upon which they stood, consecrated by the monks, so that any man who

attempts to plow it up is prevented by innumerable white doves that rise from the furrows. These visitors were shamefully eager to leave "Fair Innisfallen" on that gray, stormy day. They longed above everything to be within walking distance of their hotel with its cheerful fires.

"Those fellows aren't afraid," said John, pointing to two or three old fishermen standing on the pebbly beach. "Come ahead; we'll be all right. I've been in worse gales than this."

These weather-wise natives had indeed reassured Mrs. Pitt, although they advised her to start as soon as possible, as the wind was evidently rising. Taking their advice, they found themselves, at the end of half an hour, among the reeds of the further shore, near the hotel. The men, leaping out, pulled the boat to the landing. It had been a wet, anxious trip which even the boys did not care to remember.

Sitting by the fire drinking their tea a few minutes later, they resolved to do no more boating until the weather became settled, if such a thing ever came to Killarney.

One day the unexpected happened; they woke to a cloudless sky and a perfect day such as is seldom enjoyed in this greenest, rainiest spot in all Ireland. With eyes upon the mountains and blue lake, they ate their breakfast and voted

which one of many trips they should take. John pleaded so eloquently and persistently for the Gap of Dunloe that he won two of them to his side, and, as this was a majority, the Gap of Dunloe it was.

“ There’s some fun there! ” John had concluded; “ you have to ride horseback. Bring your whip, Betty. It’ll be sport! ”

Gayly they rattled away on their outside-car, through the village of Aghadoe, where one may yet chance to see young people dancing on the green of a Sunday afternoon; past ruined Killalee Church, and over an old bridge crossing the River Laune. Before them rose the great peaks of the Tomies Mountain and Macgillicuddy’s Reeks. Near a little cottage they jumped off the car.

When they learned that the hut in front of which were gathered jaunting-cars, shaggy ponies, guides, beggars, and tourists, was originally Kate Kearney’s, of course they all either sang or whistled:

“ Oh, did ye ne’er hear of Kate Kearney?
She lives by the Lake of Killarney.”

Presently a woman, presumably a descendant of Kate’s, came out in the hope of selling some of her refreshments; most of the tourists having persistently declined these and as sturdily ignored the husky beggars, ponies were led for-

ward and the tourists began to mount them. Betty, not being an experienced horsewoman, had had some secret dread of this part of the day's programme; but she need not have feared, for the poor thin beasts had barely enough energy to trudge along the rocky way with their burdens, prodded by frequent kicks and blows from the guides.

"Mine's an old cow," muttered John, in disgust. "I'd rather get off and walk, I would!"

"And I don't think the Gap is very pretty," added Betty. "I'll be glad when we get to the end. It all looks so lonesome here, even if the sun is bright!"

The beauty of the Gap of Dunloe is of a very somber kind. The mountains are bare and steep, and some have a distinctly purple tint from the color of the stone; in the narrow pass are a number of small, still lakes, into one of which St. Patrick is said to have cast the last snake in Ireland, safely fastened in a box. But another legend has it that the saint never entered Kerry at all, only raising his hand to bless "all beyond the Reeks."

After a glimpse of Coom Dhuv, or the Black Valley, with its white cataract, they left the ponies on the shore of the Upper Lake. Once in their boat, they hungrily ate the luncheon which they had brought with them. Meanwhile they were passing through the long, narrow

channel connecting the Upper and Middle Lakes; the water runs swift and clear here, and trees line the way. All nature appears gentle after the rather dreadful glories of the Gap of Dunloe.

Soon the branches parted enough for Mrs. Pitt to point out the Eagle's Nest, a bare mountain shaped like a pyramid.

"Oh!" cried John, his mouth full of sandwich; "are there eagles there? It would be bully to climb up and find their nests."

"There used to be plenty of eagles, but the bugles and the cannon have frightened most of them away."

"What bugles? What cannon?" demanded the children promptly. They had hardly spoken before the guide jumped to the shore and, raising a bugle to his lips, called forth a wonderful echo from the sides of Eagle's Nest Mountain. First a single note would be caught up and then many times repeated, now loudly, now softly; after that a number of notes would be sounded, only to rumble about the mountain and finally die away in the distance, suggesting that the O'Donoghue and his whole court might be hunting there, far off in an enchanted forest.

When the guide had exhausted his skill, he fired the cannon, and at this a thousand different sounds, growls, crashes, thunders, now har-



AND, OF COURSE, THEY COULD NOT OMIT MUCKROSS ABBEY. — *Page 152.*

monious, now discordant, resounded from the surrounding mountains. The boys thought it splendid, but Betty's hands flew to her ears, and she did not take them down until the roar subsided to a soft murmur in the distant tree-tops.

About a mile farther on they sighted the stone Weir Bridge; then, before they knew it, their boat was shot along by the rapid current and whisked under the larger arch of this bridge said to have been built by the Danes. This point, where the Upper Lake pours through a narrow passage into the Middle, or Torc Lake, is called Waters Meet.

The guide, leaning on his oars in the quiet water beyond the bridge, congratulated his party; most people were afraid to stay in the boat, he said, and usually were landed to view the rapids from the bank.

"But there wasn't time to be scared!" laughed Betty, as her brother asked if they couldn't do it again.

"It was corking! But a fellow ought to have warning. I didn't get my money's worth!" he added, when the guide shook his head and said they must not go back.

Landing, they went into the little tourists' cottage on Dinis Island, built by the Mr. Herbert who lives in the big house at Muckross. Here they bought post-cards and souvenirs in

bog oak or arbutus wood, miniature round towers, or quaint polished boxes with Killarney views on them. The cottage fits admirably into its picturesque surroundings. There are avenues of lime trees and, near the cottage, is the one plane-tree in Ireland. Arbutus-trees, beeches, oaks, and ashes grow close to the water, and the spot is one of the most beautiful in the whole territory of the lakes.

Reminded by the guide that it was growing late, they were rowed into Glena Bay, in the largest, or Lower Lake, and past Glena Point, where there is another pretty cottage. Slowly they made their way, between familiar Ross and Innisfallen Islands, and on to the landing in front of their hotel. There was not a ripple on the lake that evening and the mountains had cast off their veils, to be fully admired by the strangers. All were grateful for the rare day which fickle Killarney had given them.

There was yet much to see in the neighborhood; it takes many days to exhaust the lovely drives and to see all the waterfalls. And, of course, they could not omit Muckross Abbey, where descendants of the O'Donoghue were buried as late as 1833. The abbey stands on high ground, amid trees, overlooking a green stretch of lawn ending at the Middle Lake. The cloisters consist of twenty-two well-preserved arches. One may walk through them,

around the four sides of the court, and it is an ideal place to linger. The old arches, the cloister roof, and the floor are tinged with a faint, dull green from the moss and the dampness; the sun streams in through the branches of a magnificent yew tree which shades the cloistered court. So quiet and beautiful is it there that one dreads to break the spell by speaking. It is somehow easy to believe the peasants' legend, that the tree bleeds if it is cut and that any one injuring it will surely die within the year.

Returning to the "Friar's Walk," lined with horsechestnuts and beeches, they climbed to the seats of their jaunting-car and drove out through the gates of Mr. Herbert's demesne on which Muckross Abbey stands, to find themselves soon amid very different scenes. It was Saturday, the day on which the town of Killarney holds its pig market. Such muddy, squealing pigs; such bickering and chattering among the shawled women, their owners or purchasers; such struggles to lift the animals into waiting donkey-carts. It was almost impossible to push through the main streets of the town, where the peasants were elbowing in and out of the slovenly shops. In Killarney's lanes are many poor, thatched cottages, and cows, goats, and chickens wander about unmolested.

“ It belongs to Lord Kenmare,” Mrs. Pitt told them, having finished her business with the station master. “ Only about a century ago it was rebuilt, the owner taking great care that there should be a garden space behind each house. But the leases made no mention of sub-lettings, so the people straightway let these bits of ground to others, who built hovels there. In a short time the town was as crowded and dirty as before. Attempts at reform sometimes meet with unexpected results in Ireland. Now, Patrick, drive us to the workhouse.”

This huge building, where Mrs. Pitt had an errand with the matron, shelters orphans, half-witted people, poverty-stricken old men and women, and seems the more gloomy for its situation in the beautiful country of Killarney.

“ Will I just give you a peep into the workhouse? ” asked the motherly matron who came out of her lodge behind Mrs. Pitt. “ Sure I will, and don’t be thinking it’s such a bad place intirely; we’ve a hard task, that’s the truth, but we do our best, and glory be to God we get through with it somehow.”

In big rooms were many old women huddled together; the old men were in the opposite wing. Having glanced at them, they followed the matron across several stone-paved courts and through heavy doors, until she came to a room

where the children were eating their supper of hot milk and large squares of bread. The babies were none too clean, but they looked happy and were cared for by the older girls, upon whom the responsibilities of life had already settled. The floor and tables were bare, spattered with milk, and the room was damp and almost dark. Yet the case of these girls was not without hope.

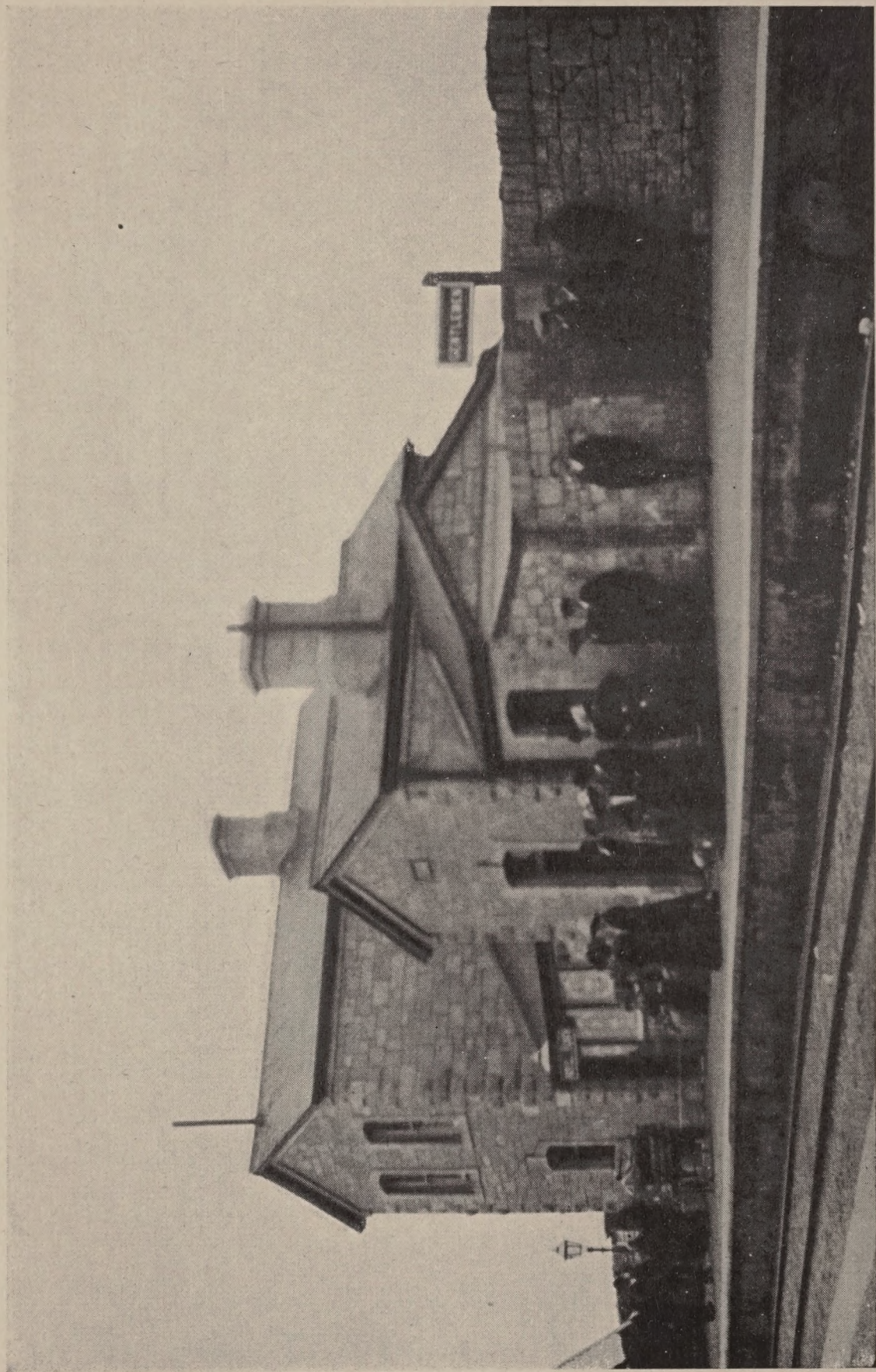
“ They go to America just as soon as ever they’re ould enough, and then they’re afther sending back passage money to the littler ones. They forget the ould workhouse when they can, and the others, they never tell on them.”

CHAPTER TWELVE

FROM LONELY VALENTIA TO BUSY LIMERICK

“ HAVE I frinds in the States, is it? Faix! I have that! Shure who hasn't? Me sister Biddy, she got married on a boy out o' Cork, an' the two o' them, they wint out to the States, to Springfield it was. And me brother he got a job in New York on thim elevated thrains, I mind; and there's me two cousins in Ohio. It's this five year gone I've been savin' me passage money to go out to the States, and I'll be off the morrow from Queenstown, plaze God.”

The platform at Farranfore station, the junction for Valentia, was crowded with hilarious young people awaiting the down train to Cork and the steamer. Dressed in their best, and grasping big strapped valises of shiny leather which held their few belongings, they were starting for “ the States,” the land of promise. Such groups may be seen any day, anywhere in Ireland. Before bidding good-by to the “ ould folks ” at the home stations, there are usually many tears and wild cries and songs, encouraged by “ the drink.” Girls hang recklessly out of carriage windows, waving and



THE PLATFORM AT FARRANFORE STATION.—Page 156.

shouting last messages; they cling to every little relic of their old home, screaming and hysterically lamenting their departure. But soon they are all smiles and anticipations, for they are going to "the States," where are many members of their families whom for years they have been planning to follow. Very few of them ever come back, certainly not to stay. Often they send money to keep the roof on "th' ould place"; occasionally they return on a brief visit, to dazzle Irish eyes with American clothes and astonish Irish ears with tales of glorious America.

It is the same way throughout Ireland. There is much talk of Home Rule, after which will obviously come the millennium; but in the meantime every one disparages Ireland and praises America, where he has at least ten relatives. The more you may wish to hear of Irish folk tales, fairy-tales, ghost-tales, the more insistently will the people talk to you about "the States." One old jarvey said he had always wanted to emigrate, for there was no good in Ireland at all. "Do yez know," he asked, "that we have even to pay a tax on dogs in th' ould counthry here?"

The gay party of emigrants was at last left behind when Mrs. Pitt and her party boarded the Valentia train. Slowly they traveled through scenes still delightfully Irish and un-

progressive. Practically all the peasants of the district are digging and delving in America with an energy they never show at home. The railroad skirted the mountains, and far below lay beautiful Dingle Bay. The huts were set in hollows, surrounded by walls almost as high as the roofs, and there were trimmed fuchsia hedges.

Passing Cahirciveen, where Daniel O'Connell was born, the railroad came to a sudden end at Valentia and the water. Valentia Island, where there is not "one dhry step 'twixt your fut an' the States," had to be reached by ferry; and it is scarcely necessary to say that it was raining steadily.

But Mrs. Pitt was not to be long perplexed. As she stepped to the wet platform, a big bland Irishman, as cocksure and capable as "Florrie," stepped up: "Just ye lave it all to me, ma'am. I'll take care of yez fine. The boat's below; in a minute I'll show yez the way. Here's me ould coat what'll keep the ladies dhry; that coat came from America, ma'am. Shure it's meself has lived tin years in Boston."

Led by this new American friend, they carefully picked their way through the mud and down a slippery stone pier. To the boys' infinite amusement, Mrs. Pitt, Barbara, and Betty were established in the middle seat of the big dory, the borrowed raincoat entirely

covering them, heads and all. As John and Philip stood on the pier they had a glimpse of the other passengers in the boat, and John, in his glee, almost let out the joke.

“If you could see what’s behind you, Betty, you’d—— Stop kicking me, Philip; they are, too, p——” But Philip’s hand covered John’s mouth and the sentence was not finished.

Thus it happened that not until they were landing at Valentia Island did Mrs. Pitt and the girls know that the half-dozen passengers referred to were pigs!

Shelter was found at the Royal Hotel, facing the bay and mainland, a hotel chill and empty, where painters were still at work preparing for the summer season. They ordered a bright peat fire in the drawing-room and there they passed the afternoon, kept inside by the persistent rain. Once Betty innocently seated herself on a broad window-seat and, to her consternation, found one side of her blue serge dress covered with white paint. At dinner, not being pleased with the soup which was served him, John tried to improve its flavor by pouring in a quantity of Royal Worcestershire Sauce, and adding pepper. The top of the pepper shaker fell off, and, although he tried to eat his “improved” soup, he burnt his tongue and flung down his spoon so suddenly that Barbara dropped the salt, shaker

and all, into her plate. Fortunately they had the dining-room to themselves, and could laugh at their series of disasters.

At eight o'clock they had an appointment to see the Atlantic Cable station, so, donning rubbers and raincoats, they trudged for half a mile along a muddy road. They were well repaid. John's eyes were big with astonishment at what he saw.

"We work all around the clock here, but our rush hours are from one to six P.M.; that's why I asked you to wait till eight to visit the station," the foreman explained. "All the news of Europe passes through this southwest corner of Ireland, so we've plenty to keep us busy. Of course, you know that the Atlantic Cable was laid in 1866; there had been an unsuccessful attempt in 1857. Valentia was the first station established; we're now the Anglo-American Cable, but soon we're to be Western Union. The station at Newfoundland is almost two thousand miles away, but the man at that end is working this instrument which moves the tiny, glass, self-inked needle that traces the message, here in our office. Come; we'll go inside and you'll see for yourselves."

In the few small rooms, men were feverishly working, receiving and retransmitting cable and telegraphic messages from all parts of the world, a copy of each one of these messages

being automatically made and kept for reference. The men's movements and the queer instruments on the littered tables were perplexing.

First, they watched the glass needle, invented by Lord Kelvin, as it rapidly traced messages on a narrow strip of paper which constantly unwound before the receiver. Very surely it worked, moved by the distant hand.

“Whenever no message is being received, the needle makes a straight line, like this. There are usually a few words of warning before a message is sent. Now this man will cable for us to Newfoundland, and ask them what kind of weather they are having.”

When the message had been dispatched, they turned to watch men at some of the other tables. They saw how the strips of paper passed over a mucilage-like substance and, when cut into sections, were pasted on blanks with wonderful promptness. They saw mysterious telegraph scrawls in queer characters on perforated strips of paper, and were told that all messages had to go through processes of being transposed from the wavy lines into characters and from characters into English, or French, or German. Then they hurried back to the receiver's desk, where the answer to their message would arrive. When the needle stopped, the man cut off the bit of paper and

presented it to John, who read it aloud: "Senate passes Pension Bill—Big Suffrage Parade in New York—Weather cool and cloudy."

As they were exclaiming over this message of their own, the overseer opened the door and bowed them out. Apparently their time was up, and they went through the rain, back to their hotel.

The next morning being fair, they had a view of the narrow caves in the cliffs on the mainland, opposite Valentia, some of which are said to reach two hundred feet into the mountain. These caves were known to smugglers in the old Spanish days, and one was used by John Paul Jones when he was a pirate, so the story goes. Old Ballymacarberry Castle, once a stronghold of the MacCarthys, is also near the shore, on the mainland. The English landlady told them a quaint story about this castle.

"At one time two brothers occupied it, and their wives had a terrible quarrel. The MacCarthy who lived on the lower floor was disagreeable enough to cut off the water supply, but this did not disturb his brother, who calmly substituted wine for water. There are underground and undersea passages from that castle to several points, and one of them could be entered if the air were not too foul. Oh, you'll

not be going by this afternoon's train, ma'am? You should see the Knight of Kerry's fine demesne on the other side of the island; he has such beautiful ferns and enormous fuchsias! And over there the cliffs and the waves are really superb! You'll not see breakers anywhere like those on the Valentia coast. You've quite determined? Very well, then; I'll tell the boots to have your luggage down."

So they were once more escorted across the ferry by their still faithful friend of the day before, who did not leave them until he had them comfortably established in an empty carriage and had shaken hands, wishing them good fortune on their Irish travels. Journeying back to Farranfore Junction, they found a train waiting to take them through Tralee to Listowel, where they booked seats on the Lartigue monorailway for Ballybunion, on the coast.

"Ballybunion!" Barbara giggled. "What a funny name! Why are there so many 'ballys,' Mother?"

Mrs. Pitt, who had been busy checking their luggage in the cloakroom to await their return to Listowel later in the day, turned to reply:

"Bally means town, don't you know, and that is how it happens that so many Irish names begin with it. There's Ballycastle, Bal-

lymoney, Ballynahinch, Ballybrophy, Ballymahon, and dozens more. And there are just as many 'kills' (meaning churches) I think,—Kilmacow, Kilmacthomas, Killrush, Kilkee, Killorglin, Kilmacrenan, Killaloe, and—— I believe it was that same *Penelope*, Kate Douglas Wiggin's heroine, who once asked a jarvey what was the meaning of the prefix, bally. The man thought for a moment, and then said: "I don't think there's annything onderhanded in the meanin', milady; I think it means bally, jist." " " " "

They had hardly finished laughing over this, when John flung open the door to tell them that the train was ready.

"If you can call that thing a train!" he added, grinning. "How's it ever going to run on that one high rail? Say, Philip, you haven't seen it, have you? Hurry up; it's a beaut."

The queer little railway carriages on this unique line are hung on a single rail high above the ground, and have seats running the length of, instead of across, the car.

"They're like panniers on a donkey's back!" cried Betty.

Before a start was made, the guards requested several passengers to move from one side to the other, regardless of doors marked First or Second Class, so as to make the proper balance. As a result, Mrs. Pitt and

Philip were shut in with two laborers, while the others were on the opposite side of the train with a priest. After many preparations, a shrill whistle blew and every one looked expectant.

“It goes!” exclaimed the irrepressible John, as the train started with a jerk. “What do you think of that? Ringling’s Circus ought to have it!”

“Feels like a queer rocking-chair, doesn’t it, Barbara?” said Betty.

A short ride brought them to Ballybunion, a delightful resort by the sea, where there are cliffs, caves, and sandy beaches. After luncheon, Mrs. Pitt sat on the grass near a ruined castle, with a wide sea view before her, writing letters while the rest explored Ballybunion. All too soon it was time to take the toy train back to Listowel, where they caught a Limerick express. At ten o’clock that night they were too sleepy to notice many of the city sights, though John did observe that all the men seemed equipped for horseback riding, wearing knee-breeches and leggings of cloth or leather, and carrying whips.

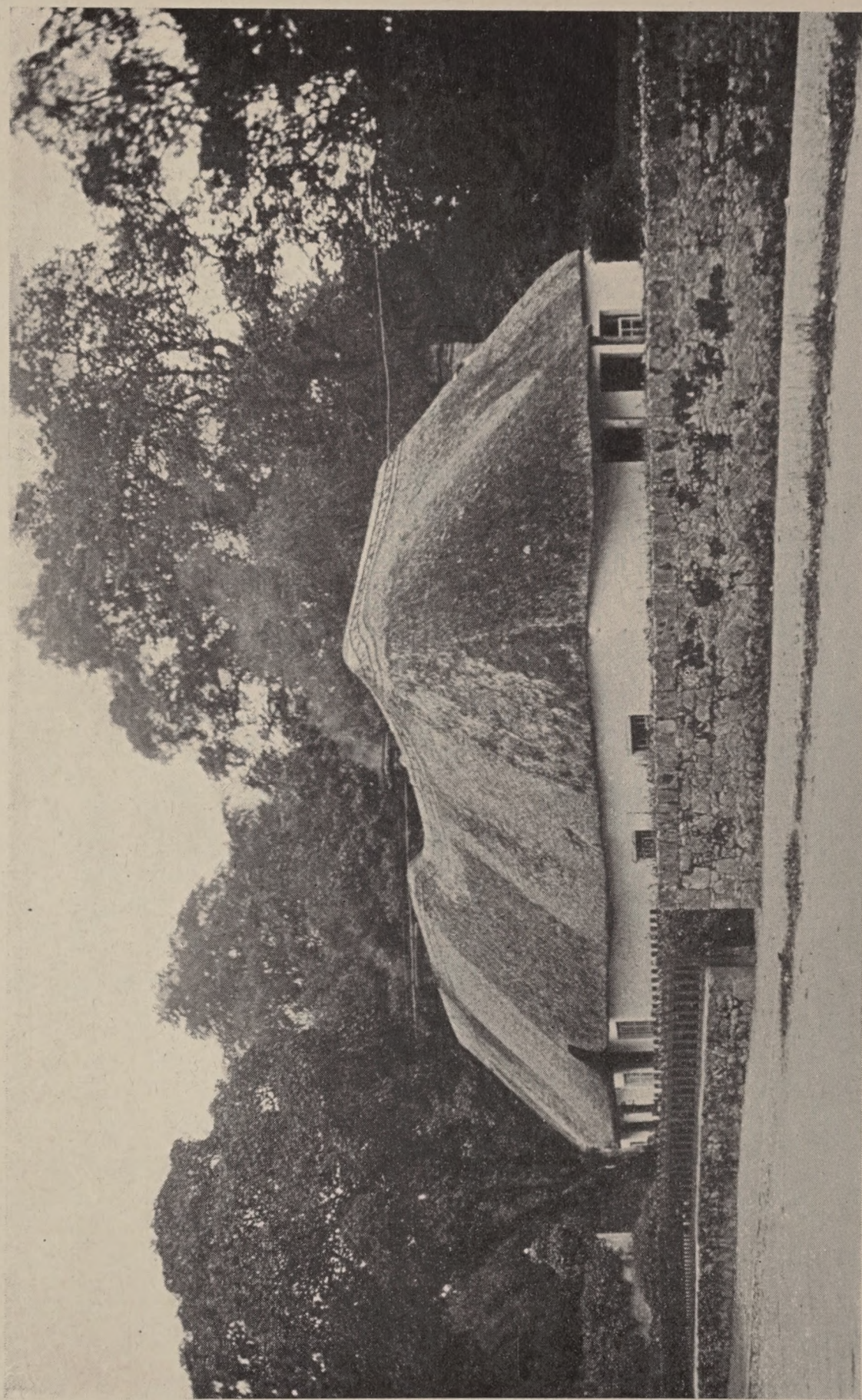
In the morning, this matter was explained. “It’s the races,” said John breathlessly. “Can we go?”

They did go, of course, as soon as they could find a jarvey with an empty car who would

take them. Climbing on in George Street, Limerick's business thoroughfare, they were off at such a reckless pace that Mrs. Pitt vowed if she ever got to Green Park alive she would walk every step of the way back. Between useless appeals to the jarvey for mercy, she had to pull down the boys, who were constantly standing up and shouting. All exclamations were unheard, however, as they flew along the streets leading to the course, filled by hundreds of jaunting-cars, tearing along as madly as their own, men sitting one on top of the other or hanging on to anything of which they could catch hold.

"There are nine men and three boys on that car just behind us," placid Barbara was heard to remark in a moment's lull. "I wonder it does not break, Mother."

At last they arrived without accident, paid their sixpence admission fees, and walked towards the double turf course, more than a mile long. There were flat, hurdle, and steeple-chase races which Philip and John followed with the enthusiasm of true "sports." The others were interested, too, but they were able at times to turn their eyes away from the racing horses. On the flag-decorated stands were ladies and gentlemen who applauded their favorites; there were other people who stood up in their motor-cars to watch the jockeys, sport-



HERE WAS A VILLAGE TO CREEP INTO ONE'S HEART.—*Page 169.*

ing men, onlookers, and fakirs, who added to the gayety of the scene.

It was difficult that afternoon to persuade the boys to stay in Limerick and resume the prosaic business of sightseeing. But, at Mrs. Pitt's insistence, they visited St. Mary's Cathedral, and viewed the Treaty Stone and King John's Castle, by the river Shannon.

Limerick has been an important place since the Danes came to pit their strength against that of Malachy, King of Meath. The foreigners seem to have been numerous in the ninth century when Turgesius, ruler of the Danes, demanded that old King Malachy give him his lovely daughter as a bride. The Danes were so greatly feared that the king dared not refuse, but he cunningly stipulated that his daughter should be accompanied by fifteen of her ladies. The Dane agreed, planning to give these attendants to fifteen of his warriors. The day came for the ladies to go to the castle, and Turgesius was on the point of claiming his bride, when the fifteen ladies threw off their robes and showed themselves so many stout, armed Irish soldiers. The Danes were easily overcome, and the Irish flung open the gates to King Malachy and his troops.

"Did King John of England build this castle?" Betty inquired, looking from across the

river at its solid six-century-old walls and towers.

“ Yes, an ancient historian tells us that the king was ‘ so pleased with the agreeableness of the city that he caused a very fine castle and bridge to be built there.’ In the time of Richard I., Limerick was the next largest city to Dublin, and was granted a charter, permitting it to elect a mayor, a century before either Dublin or London obtained this privilege. But, of course, Limerick’s fame rests on the part it played in the struggle between King James and King William. After the Battle of the Boyne and James’s departure for England, King William and his followers besieged Limerick for three weeks. One of the generals in the besieging army, looking at the city, which was very poorly prepared for a siege, scoffingly said that Limerick ‘ could be taken with roasted apples ’; but he did not know the Irish. When the enemy had managed to cross the bridge and were in the very streets of the city, the old men, the women, and the children joined in the fight and drove back King William’s men. The enemy then marched to Athlone, which they besieged and took, later returning to make another attack upon Limerick. The second siege was made just a year later, and was soon successful, William’s general, Ginkle, and the great Irish leader, Sarsfield, agreeing

upon terms. The treaty of peace was signed on the third day of October, in 1691, on this very stone. Yes, it has since been mounted on this pedestal, John, to preserve it better.”

Late that afternoon they took a train to Adare, a lovely little town not far from busy Limerick. Here, on the Earl of Dunraven's demesne, are the ruins of a Franciscan Abbey and of an old castle which once belonged to the powerful Desmond family. Close by are two Augustinian abbeys, the Black Abbey and the White Abbey, but these have both been restored. The interest of these ruins is enhanced by the fair setting which nature has provided for them,—supplemented by Lord Dunraven's care—a little river, low, green meadows, great trees, several glorious horsechestnuts in full bloom, smooth lawns, and gravel paths.

As evening drew on, and they returned to Adare, even the three English members of the party admitted the village to be as lovely as any in England. At the curve in the road were the vine-covered entrance gates of the demesne; opposite their attractive inn, the Dunraven Arms, was a row of charming white-washed old cottages, with curving thatched roofs behind trim green hedges. Here was a village to creep into one's heart!

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

A TRIO OF CASTLES

THEIR jaunting-car, surely the largest and clumsiest in all Ireland, stopped at an old gateway and neglected lodge. Beyond stretched a grass-grown driveway, all its ancient, gray trees untrimmed and many dead. No one was in sight, and the place was absolutely still.

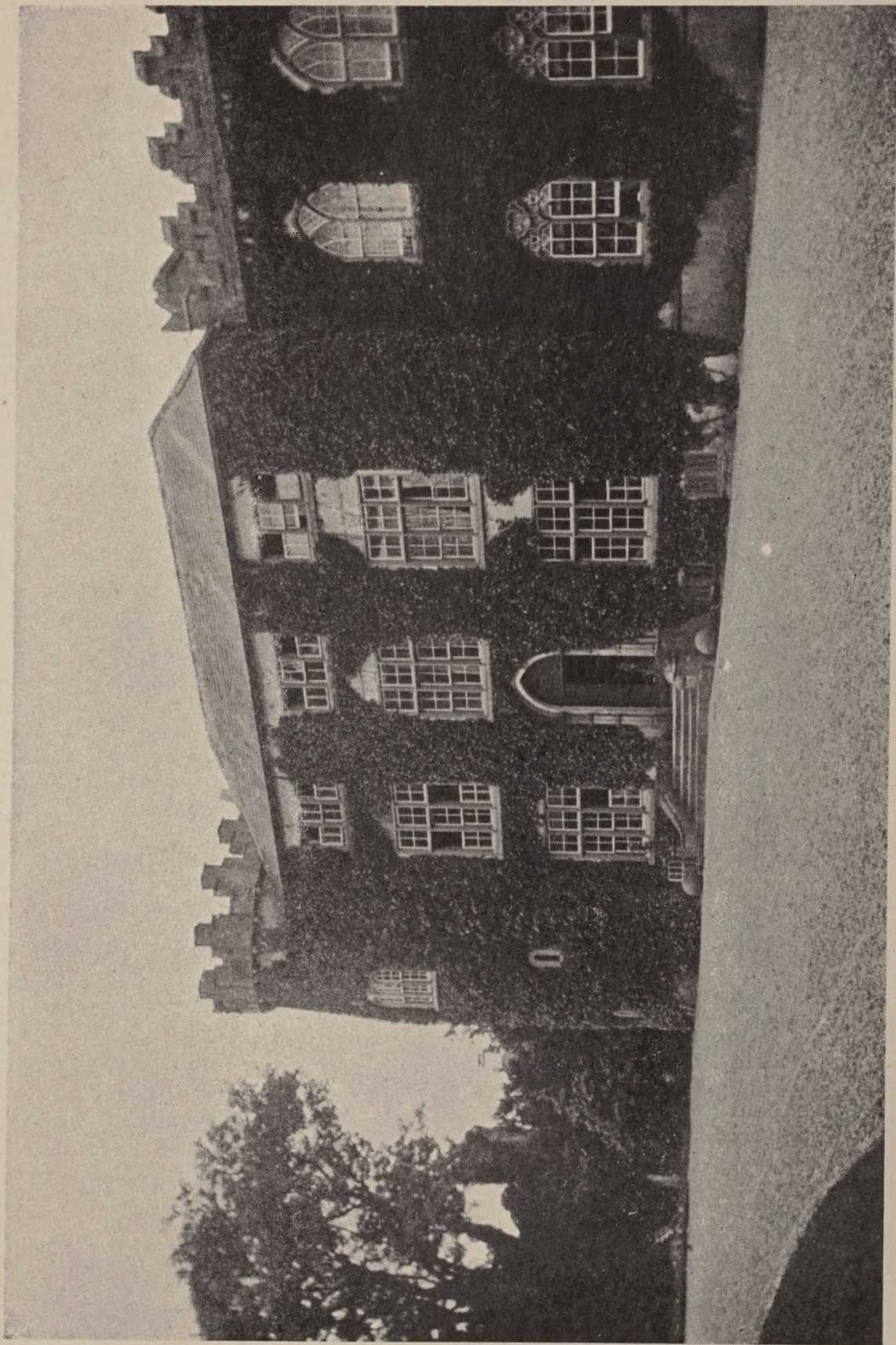
“Anything doing?” inquired John, adjusting the strap of his camera over his shoulder.

Mrs. Pitt laughed. “I’m not sure,” she said, “but I think we may venture. Perhaps we would be more sure of a welcome if we left the car here at the gate and walked the rest of the way.”

Having instructed the jarvey to wait, they followed the little-used drive. For some distance it ran in a straight line, between low-lying meadows; then, with a turn, it brought them in sight of Ffranckfort Castle.

“‘The only moated grange in Ireland!’” exclaimed Betty. “Doesn’t that sound like a book?”

The whole place was as like a book as its



“THE ONLY MOATED GRANGE IN IRELAND,” SAID BETTY. “DOESN’T THAT SOUND LIKE A BOOK?”
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name. Standing far within the borders of a wide demesne, surrounded first by a deep moat, filled with water from a mountain stream, and then by an ivy-covered wall with towers at the corners, the old house seems to be still part of the age when it was built, perhaps four hundred years ago. Here the thought of cities with their hurry and confusion, comes to one only like a troubled dream. The nearest town, only a little market-place, said to have been founded in 620, is seven long Irish miles away.

John made them all pose while he photographed them with the castle for a background, lest, as he explained, they should get "stung" and he could not do this later. Then they boldly crossed the drawbridge and found themselves in the inclosure before the house, the lawns bordered by gay flower beds. The many-paned windows of the castle, the main part of which is three stories high, were flung open. Mounting the few steps to the nail-studded old door, Mrs. Pitt knocked. Betty stood close behind.

After a short delay, a maid received Mrs. Pitt's request and vanished. As they waited they had a glimpse of a square hall, with dark paneling and a corner fireplace over which hung a portrait. Then a tall, pleasant lady came towards them, actually seeming glad to welcome them.

"Show you Ffranckfort Castle?" she re-

peated. "Do you care to see it? Indeed, we'll be only too proud to show you all we have. Come in, won't you? Yes, all of you. Of course, you'll have tea first. My niece will be so glad to see you, and perhaps the Major, too, although he is not very well now."

They followed her into a drawing-room with a fine arched ceiling, where they drank tea and ate little cakes, chatting pleasantly with the two ladies of the castle.

"Say, this is bully!" said John, accepting a second piece of plum cake. "Thanks. We didn't know whether you'd even let us rubber at things through the gate."

Betty was asking if Ffranckfort really was "the only moated grange in Ireland," and just what a "grange" was, anyhow.

"Oh, it means a kind of farmhouse," Miss R. replied; "I think that's what Americans would call it. You see, this is more like a manor-house than a castle. And, as to the moat,—why, I suppose it is the only one, at least in this part of the country; but I really don't know. You see, I've always lived here. Sometimes I make visits in Ireland, and occasionally I go to London, too; but I've never been out of the British Isles. Just fancy! And you've come from America! It must be splendid there, with so much to see and do."

"Yes," said Betty, "but I love it here. I

believe we'd like to change places. Wouldn't it be funny if we could? "

Laughing, they passed through the hall again to go outdoors. To reach the garden, they crossed the moat, going first through one of the round turrets in the wall.

" Is it haunted? " asked Mrs. Pitt, in jest.

" Well," Miss H., their hostess, answered, " I've never seen anything, but I've often felt a presence. You can't mistake the feeling, you know. But wait until you see Leap Castle; there are ghosts there. Leap has the ghosts, but we have the moat. It's a friendly rivalry. Oh, yes, Mrs. Darby will welcome you to Leap. We all live so quietly, here in the country, that it's our greatest pleasure to have people come to see us. Here's the garden. That box hedge is four hundred years old, and the bush peony has been growing here for five hundred years."

The gardens of Ffranckfort Castle are full of charm, the old paths winding among beds, borders, and shrubberies that have flourished while generations at the castle lived and died. Here and there, across the flowers, one gets glimpses of the battlemented walls and the moat below. Two enormous trees, blown down in " the big wind," lie across the moat, just as they fell; in that corner of Ireland it is no easy matter to find means for removing them. At the foot of the garden is a lawn-tennis court.

"You play?" Philip asked the younger lady.

"Oh, yes, when I have any one to play with me," she replied.

Next the stableyard was inspected. Here they saw an old-fashioned coach, in which the Major's father and mother toured Europe on their wedding journey.

"It's all rotting away," said Miss H.; "the other day I took out the old chintz lining and I am making it into a valance for my bed."

Returning to the front of the castle, they found the Major, who had come out from his library to meet them. He urged them to remain for tea, but, after lingering for a short talk on the lawn, Mrs. Pitt said they must start back to Roscrea.

"Thank you for being so kind to us," said Betty to Miss R. "I hope you will come to America some day. I'd love to have you, but I couldn't show you any place half so nice as Ffranckfort Castle."

With many backward glances they went slowly down the driveway and, mounting the outside-car, drove back through Roscrea and seven miles beyond it, to Leap Castle, "the most haunted castle in Ireland."

As they neared the ancestral home of the O'Carrolls, the sun hid behind a hill, leaving the castle shut in darkly by great trees with heavy foliage. From the drawing-room win-



“LEAP HAS THE GHOSTS, BUT WE HAVE THE MOAT.”—*Page 173.*

dows, however, they found a cheerful view extending across a broad valley where the sun still lay warm on the fields. This ancient room made a strange setting for the more modern rugs, furniture, and paintings with which it was filled.

Mrs. Darby soon appeared. She had been riding, it seemed, for she wore a dusty habit, carried a whip, and was bareheaded. Brusquely flinging open the door, she strode up to Betty, who happened to be nearest, and shook her hand cordially, saying, " Ah, some American cousins, I see! "

" Oh, no! " Betty hastened to correct this wrong impression. " We're not related at all, and only two of us are Americans. We wanted to see your castle, and we thought——"

But Mrs. Darby was not listening to Betty, neither did she seem to give much heed to Mrs. Pitt's offered explanations. Sweeping all such details aside, she sat down and related tales of the castle. One after the other she rattled off old legends, stories of scandals, sieges, murders, betrayals, escapes, captures, treasure-hidings, and treasure-findings. She had them all at her tongue's end, and was extraordinarily proud of them, no matter how much they disgraced her husband's family. Her guests were so astonished that they were unable to follow this fluent mixture of fact and fable.

At the first opportunity, Mrs. Pitt interrupted her with: "Oh, pardon me, but will you repeat that story of how Leap first came into possession of the Darbys?"

"Ah, to be sure! Yes, yes! It was through a daughter of the O'Carrolls who was in love with Jonathan Darby, a prisoner in Leap Castle. She sacrificed her family's safety and helped her lover to escape, you see. Some tales have it that he leaped on horseback from the terrace to the valley below; some say he jumped into the branches of a great yew tree. And then, again, it may not have been Jonathan Darby at all who took the leap, but some one else, much farther back in the castle's history; for the O'Carrolls were famous all over Ireland, —Princes of Ely they were.

"Lords to whom great men submit
Are the O'Carrolls of the plain of Birr;
Princes of Ely as far as the lofty Slieve Bloom,
The most hospitable land in Erin.

"Eight districts and eight chiefs are ruled
By the valiant Princes of Ely of the land of herds.
Valiant in enforcing their tributes
Are the troops of the yellow-ringleted hair.'

And their castle of Leap was one of the strongest in the country, practically impregnable in those days. The oldest part is the cen-

tral tower, of course; that it was built by the Danes is shown by the fact that it tapers slightly. That's a proof of its ancient origin, my dears. Next oldest is the 'Priest's House,' now part of one of the wings. In repairing it not long ago, they found a beam bearing the date 1314. The Danish tower formerly had four stories, besides two that were underground. From these there was a subterranean passage connecting them with a rath in a distant field, making it easy, you know, to get supplies in case of siege. Up in the tower is a haunted chapel where an O'Carroll murdered a priest, his brother, who had presumed to say mass before he arrived. The ghost of the priest walks there, carrying his head under his arm. No one knows how many murders there have been in the castle. Not long ago we found an oubliette full of bones; my husband had three cartloads of them taken out and buried in the churchyard. Among the bones was found a watch, proving that not all the murders were ancient, after all. But will you climb the tower and see the chapel? "

They were eager enough to satisfy even enthusiastic Mrs. Darby, so they all followed their hostess up the winding stair, carrying candles. Mrs. Darby now pointed out the door of a chamber which no one would occupy because of its ghosts; now she showed them a niche in the

old wall made by her own hands, for she is fond of searching out secrets of the castle.

“ Maybe she hunts for the lost gold,” whispered John, after they had heard the story of an ancestor of the present Jonathan Darby who, being suspected of Jacobite sympathies, sought safety in flight, first having entrusted his treasure to a servant who was soon afterwards killed.

“ Mr. Darby hates his bloody ancestors,” they were told presently, “ and he refuses to search for their bones or their gold. He’s afraid of finding more scandalous stories. But I often come up here and dig. Yes, I’ve seen ghosts by day and by night,—sometimes when as many as two other witnesses were with me. Ah! you may laugh if you like, Mrs. Pitt, but I must believe it. And, every night at eleven-thirty the dogs bark. It never fails. Explain that, if you can.”

Just then they stepped out from the turret stairway into the dusky chapel, and went on up a ladder to the top of the castle keep. It was growing dark, and Betty gave a startled little jump when a door suddenly slammed behind them.

It was a relief to some members of the party to descend the dark turret stair, cross the stately entrance hall, and finally to step out upon the lawn where Mr. Darby was

strolling with his dogs. The owner of Leap Castle professed a scorn for the old legends and for his disreputable ancestors.

“I should like to sell my castle to a rich American from the Waldorf-Astoria,” remarked Jonathan Darby, “and then build myself a new house.”

Betty wondered if he could mean what he said. Even as he spoke, his wife was telling Mrs. Pitt one more strange tale of the Darby family.

“A Jonathan Darby never succeeds his father as heir to the estate,” she said, in mysterious tones. “My husband succeeded his grandfather, and my own first child, a Jonathan Darby, died in infancy. You see, I have reason to believe in the curse pronounced on the family by a girl over whom two Darby brothers were quarreling. She interfered, being mortally wounded, and, before dying prophesied that no Jonathan Darby should ever succeed his father. Not one ever has done so.”

“I’d like a chance to stay with those dogs at night, and find out what happens to ’em at half-past eleven. I bet I’d find out,” remarked confident John.

His sister marveled at his daring, deeply pondering the fearsome tales of Leap Castle, as they drove back to Roscrea. When it came time to go to bed in a low room of the queer little

inn, she and Barbara were of one mind,—to sleep together for mutual protection if ghosts from Leap Castle should stray in.

Roscreea is near the center of Ireland. In the country about it are broad, brown boglands over which grows a quantity of yellow furze. John and Betty were pleased to see a few genuine American stone walls, uncovered by any vines, an unusual sight in Ireland.

“ I’ll bet the man who built ’em had been to ‘ the States,’ ” observed John.

They were on their way from Roscreea to Birr, or Parsonstown, a place made up of little shops and inns, and an attractive shady street of villas, with the great castle and its demesne at the end. The porter at the lodge was doubtful about letting them in, as it was not a visitors’ day; and the butler who opened the imposing castle door frowned sternly upon them, pointing the way to a back entrance. Upon applying here, they were advised to see the housekeeper and, going through some dark passages, they came to her room.

“ Do you know,” exclaimed Mrs. Pitt, “ it has been one of my ambitions to see the housekeeper’s room in a castle. I’ve read about so many in novels! This one is quite ideal—really! See the shabby armchairs and the faded red carpet, once in the drawing-rooms upstairs; and the broken bric-à-brac and the nicked

china, with the family crest, on the shelf over the grate. There are sealed jars of preserves in that cupboard. Those mahogany dining-room chairs are really fine. Isn't it perfect, Betty? "

Betty smilingly agreed, but Barbara and the boys were busy playing with a white kitten that had been asleep in an armchair. Just then the housekeeper entered, and she had stepped from the pages of a novel, like her room. She wore a black dress, her skirt covered with a snowy apron; a crisp little cap was pinned to her white hair, and there were mitts on her hands. She had a kind, motherly face, and when she saw the children and her kitten, she smiled. Mrs. Pitt then suspected that the battle was won, and it was.

"It's hardly in order to admit you on a Tuesday," said the housekeeper, tossing a ball of yarn to the kitten; "but, as her Ladyship left for London yesterday, I'll send a housemaid to show you through. You'll not mind if the rooms are all in disorder? We're busy turning them out now. Lord Oxmantown and Lady Bridget are here until to-morrow, but they'll only be glad to see the strangers."

"Oh, perhaps they won't like it!" sighed Betty, in awe of titled people.

"Bless your little heart, dear! They're not as big as their names, you know. Lord Oxman-

town is five and a half, and little Lady Bridget had her third birthday last week."

Thus reassured, they were led by a prim maid through many drawing-rooms, full of beautiful things, along broad corridors, and into the state dining-room. Sturdy little Lord Oxmantown and his sister, in a blue dress, played a shy game of hide-and-seek with the visitors. They scampered about, peeping out from unexpected nooks; and once the boy opened the sliding panel of an ebony cabinet to take out a toy engine. Leaving the children behind, they went upstairs and entered so many bedrooms, the maid always explaining, "This is a lady's room," or, "This is another gentleman's room," that Mrs. Pitt finally thanked her and said that they really could see no more.

It was raining when they went out again. A rapid walk took them within sight of the celebrated Birr telescope, the invention of a member of the family who was a famous astronomer. Hurrying back to the station after this, they took a train on to Athlone. It was after dark when they drove to the Prince of Wales Hotel, crossing the bridge over the Shannon where the fight was hottest during the siege of the place by William III.'s forces, in 1691.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

ATHLONE, “ THE DESERTED VILLAGE,” AND GALWAY

ATHLONE people are proud of Loch Ree, or Lake of the Kings, with its prettily wooded shores, its waving grasses, and its numerous islands on several of which are remains of early Christian churches. On Seven Churches, or Quaker Island, was the residence of Queen Meav, or Mab, and here she was killed by an Ulster chieftain's sling and stone.

“ Queen Mab! ” exclaimed Betty. “ Wasn't she an English fairy queen, Mrs. Pitt? ”

“ Yes, according to Shakespeare,” answered Mrs. Pitt. “ But in another legend, Mab was an Irish warrior queen who ruled eighty-eight years in Connaught. She was not noted for gentleness and modesty, but was very fierce, going into battle with the men as did other Irish women of the days of Ossian, Fingal, and Cuchulain,—the days of the verse:

“ ‘ Long, long ago, beyond the space
Of twice two thousand years,
In Erin old there lived a race
Taller than Roman spears.’ ”

Queen Meav had violent loves and hates; she plotted, fought, and took vengeance upon her enemies; but, in the end, she retired to yonder island, where she was murdered as her husband, King Ailell, had been."

Mrs. Pitt had hired a motor-car at Athlone, and, after they had skirted Loch Ree, they went on through Edgeworthstown, where the novelist, Maria Edgeworth, lived; to Pallas, the humble little village where Oliver Goldsmith was born; then on towards Lissoy, his "Deserted Village."

Barbara remembered the beginning of the poem:

"Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
Where health and plenty cheer'd the labouring swain,
Where smiling Spring its earliest visit paid,
And parting Summer's lingering blooms delay'd:
Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
Seats of my youth, when every sport could please:
How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endear'd each scene!
How often have I paused on every charm,
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topp'd the neighbouring hill;
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made!
How often have I bless'd the coming day,
When toil, remitting, lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree!

While many a pastime circled in the shade,
The young contending as the old survey'd;
And many a gambol frolick'd o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round;
And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired—
The dancing pair that simply sought renown,
By holding out to tire each other down;
The swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter titter'd round the place;
The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love;
The matron's glance, that would those looks reprove;
These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these,
With sweet succession, taught even toil to please;
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed,
These were thy charms—but all these charms are fled.' ”

When Barbara had finished, Mrs. Pitt was ready with some lines describing the village preacher:—

“ ‘ A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wish'd to change, his place;
Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power
By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain;
The long-remember'd beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruin'd spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claim'd kindred there, and had his claims allow'd;

The broken soldier, kindly bid to stay,
Sat by the fire, and talk'd the night away;
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shoulder'd his crutch, and show'd how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learn'd to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.' ”

“ I know the part about the old schoolmaster,” exclaimed John, promptly beginning:

“ ‘ Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossom'd furze, unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,
The village master taught his little school;
A man severe he was, and stern to view,
I knew him well, and every truant knew:——’ ”

John gave this last line with such an air of understanding that every one laughed; then he lost his place, and Philip had to finish:

“ ‘ Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laugh'd with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frown'd;
Yet he was kind, or if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault;
The village all declared how much he knew;
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And even the story ran that he could gauge.

In arguing, too, the parson own'd his skill,
For even though vanquish'd, he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.
But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumphed, is forgot.'"

As for Betty, she even remembered about the village inn, with its "nicely sanded floor"; and, when any one forgot a line, she could always supply it. And so reciting, they drove through the ideal little village of Glassen, on one side of whose single street were wide-spreading trees and on the other picturesque thatched or red-tiled cottages, overrun with vines and gay with flowers. Ascending a hill, they were at last in the "Deserted Village."

"It's deserted, sure enough!" muttered John, looking over the green fields and down a grassy, hedge-bordered lane. "Where've they all gone?"

"Why, they were gone even when Goldsmith wrote," Betty reminded him gently. "There never were people here,—oh, well, of course there were people and houses once, but it was long ago, when Goldsmith was very little and his father was the village preacher. He was so kind to everybody, Mrs. Pitt; I shouldn't think they would have gone away."

It needs no little imagination and much familiarity with the poem to find any vestige of this village of Goldsmith's youth to which he so longed to return. The "glassy brook" is there, reflecting the green rushes and the blue sky, and a steeple, a mile away, tells us that a church still occupies the site of that "decent church" where Goldsmith's father preached, also his brother, Henry. But the "busy mill," and the Goldsmith house are both ruins now, overgrown by weeds. Yet the pleasant country scene, with its gentle hills and valleys, its green hedges and irregular pastures, its sheltering trees and familiar wild flowers, certainly has the spirit of the "Deserted Village."

That afternoon they journeyed towards the western country of Connemara, going as far as Galway, which a native once called "nothing but an old box of ruins."

It rained practically the whole two days that they were there. Not once could they leave the hotel without umbrellas, and it was from under them that they saw Galway's narrow streets and alleys, the Corrib River, famous for its salmon fishing, Galway's few interesting buildings, and the Claddagh.

"It's a sad old place, I think," said Mrs. Pitt. "From early times Galway was famed for its rich merchants who carried on brisk trade, particularly with Spain, supplying nearly

all Ireland with wine. Its ancient name, Clan-firgail, means 'the land of gail,' or merchants. Spanish people came here to live, too, and a few of their houses, with arched doorways, courtyards, and balconies, are still to be seen. Yes, Betty, we'll come to them soon. In 1226, when the place was taken by Richard de Burgo, twelve families known as the 'Tribes of Galway,' settled here, and Galway became a flourishing English colony. The citizens found it necessary to forbid all intercourse with the native Irish. An old law of 1518 declared that 'neither O' nor Mac shall strutte or swaggere thro' the streets of Galway'; and over one of the city gates was written:

" 'From the fury of the O'Flaherties,
Good Lord, deliver us.'

The O'Flaherties were members of a powerful Irish tribe who ruled in this part of Connemara.

"But the days of Galway's grandeur will probably never return. Not long ago an attempt was made to have ocean liners stop here, the harbor being eight hours nearer New York than Queenstown. Twenty thousand pounds were spent in constructing docks, jetties and basins, but when one great ship foundered upon a forgotten reef near the town, the plan was abandoned. Galway is a city of the past."

Just opposite the Station Hotel, in the midst

of a barren square, they found a little park with rain-soaked paths. At one end is a fragment of an old house, a handsome door with an oriel window above, which, strangely enough, has been preserved and now serves as an entrance to the park. This was formerly the town house of Martin Browne. It is elaborately carved and bears the date 1627, and the names of the owner and of his wife, Marie Lynch.

“Poor Marie Lynch!” signed Betty; “I don’t believe she’d like to see her front door set up in this ugly square. She must have looked out that window so many times! And now there’s no room behind it. I don’t like to see it very much; I feel as if somebody had just died.”

They walked on down Galway’s main streets, where there are a few signs of modern civilization,—tiny shops, a newspaper office, an odd little horsecar jolting on its way to Salthill, a seaside resort. Soon they came to the house called “Lynch’s Castle,” decorated with weather-worn carvings and inscriptions, tall, square, and solid.

“Is this where your Marie lived, Betty?” inquired Barbara.

“I guess so,” looking at Mrs. Pitt questioningly. “It’s very dark and big, but it’s a real castle, isn’t it?”

This once magnificent building was the home



“IT’S VERY DARK AND BIG, BUT IT’S A REAL CASTLE, ISN’T IT?”
Page 190.

of the Lynch family for many generations. Its most celebrated owner was James Lynch Fitzstephen, mayor of Galway in 1493, whose justice was "stern and unbending." This is his gruesome story, as it is related to every tourist. A son of the mayor had taken part in a mutiny on shipboard, the plan being to kill its captain and take possession of his property. Later the young man was brought to trial and was condemned to death, with his own father acting as judge. Friends and relatives arranged to go to the older man, begging him to have mercy on his son; but Judge Lynch, hearing of their plans and fearing that he might be overpersuaded, hanged his son from one of the windows of this house, before they could present the petition.

"On the further side of St. Nicholas' churchyard," said Mrs. Pitt, "the prison window is let into the wall, and over it are the words, 'Remember Deathe—vaniti of vaniti, and all is but vaniti.' One version of the story has it that the hanging took place from the window of a prison which once stood there."

After walking through Galway's quaint streets, most of them lined with tumble-down, wretched houses, they went into St. Nicholas' Church, reputed to be the third oldest in Ireland. The exterior is quaint and unusual, the west front having three windows, each of a dif-

ferent design; and the interior, with its fine Norman arches, is quite as interesting.

"Here's the Lynch family vault," said Mrs. Pitt presently, "this low, square one in the south transept, with carvings but no inscription. These two side altars were also built by Lynch, one to his own family and one to Martin Browne."

"Look here! This is great!" cried John. "The fellow in this tomb was named Pope; and his ancestor sailed with Columbus when we were discovered. D'you get that, Betty?"

His sister assented, but she was absorbed in some quaint tombs in the floor of the nave.

"See," she said, "they have signs instead of letters. This one has scissors, and here are three hammers."

"They show what the man's business was," explained Mrs. Pitt. "The one with the three hammers was a goldsmith, of course; the shears would indicate either a tailor or a barber. How odd!"

Galway peasant women wear short petticoats of scarlet wool, usually having an overskirt, arranged in festoons. When the petticoats are new, their owners slip them over their heads and wear them to church instead of shawls. The women are very proud of them, and tourists enjoy these bright spots of color among the blackened old buildings.

Across a bridge from the city, along one shore of the bay, is the Claddagh, a settlement of fisherfolk. In olden times these people, who are said to have Spanish blood,—and look it,—never mixed with the citizens of the town; even to-day the Claddagh fishermen and those across the narrow bay are not always on the best of terms. The Claddagh men wear queer, much-patched clothes, hats with broad brims and crowns slightly pointed. The women wear the same scarlet skirts as the women of the town, but their hair and complexions are darker.

“ Their houses are set in the same funny way that they are near home, in Marblehead,” said Betty. “ They’re back to back, or corner to corner, or any way at all. And they’re all whitewashed and thatched, aren’t they? It’s dreadful how they let the cows and the pigs walk everywhere! And I should think they’d shut the upper part of their doors, so people couldn’t see inside! ”

“ I say, Mother,” began Philip, going up to Mrs. Pitt and speaking in a low tone, “ some of the old women have such queer gold rings on.”

“ They are wedding rings,” Mrs. Pitt replied. “ I’ve read that every bride, no matter how poor, must have a solid gold one. No marriage is ever performed without one of those rings; and sometimes a woman has three,—her grand-

mother's, her mother's, and her own. They have a strange design, a heart in the center, held by two hands. The first one was given by a king of the Claddagh to his bride, about the year 1700. The Claddagh still has a king who settles many of the disputes, although the people are bound to obey the municipal laws, as well. There are other unique customs, I am told. Isn't it interesting? "

Down by the Claddagh quay, fishermen were lounging and smoking in groups; even the women did not seem busy and stared with mild curiosity as Mrs. Pitt and the rest trailed past, on the way back to the hotel.

" Did I tell you that these ' Twelve Tribes of Galway ' are descended from the twelve sons of Cart, son of the king of the castle of Bwee-Sonnee,—he who found the ' Well of D'Yerree-in-Dowan,' or ' well at the end of the world ' ? Douglas Hyde tells us all about that in his delightful book of legends, called ' Beside the Fire.' "

" That's just where we are now," said Betty, as Mrs. Pitt finished, " ' beside the fire.' It's nice, isn't it, to be in here where it's so warm and pleasant? I wonder if it will ever stop raining outside."

" Lady Gregory in her ' Kiltartan History Book,' " continued Mrs. Pitt, " tells some fascinating stories about Goban Saor, the Builder,

who 'learned no trade, but was master of sixteen.' The Goban came from County Galway, so I thought perhaps you would like me to read to you about him to-night."

When Philip had brought the book from his mother's room, Mrs. Pitt first explained that Kiltartan is the name of the barony in which Lady Gregory, the Irish author, lives; and that she relates these tales as nearly as possible as she hears them from the mouths of beggars, pipers, traveling men, or inmates of the work-house. Then she began:

" 'The Goban was the master of sixteen trades. There was no beating him; he had got the gift. He went one time to Quin Abbey when it was building, looking for a job, and the men were going to their dinner, and he had poor clothes, and they began to jibe at him, and the foreman said, "Make now a cat-and-nine-tails while we are at our dinner, if you are any good." And he took the chisel and cut in the rough of the stone a cat with nine tails coming from it, and there it was complete when they came out from their dinner. There was no beating him. He learned no trade, but he was master of sixteen. That is the way a man that has no gift will get more out of his own brain than another will get through learning. . . . The Goban Saor was a mason and a smith, and he could do all things, and he was very witty. . . . Himself and his son were walking the road together one day, and the Goban said

to the son, "Shorten the road for me." So the son began to walk fast, thinking that would do it, but the Goban sent him back home when he did not know what to do. The next day they were walking again, and the Goban said again to shorten the road for him, and this time he began to run, and the Goban sent him home again. When he went in and told the wife (whom the Goban had selected for him) he was sent home the second time, she began to think, and she said, "When he bids you shorten the road, it is that he wants you to be telling him stories." For that is what the Goban meant, but it took the daughter-in-law to understand it. . . . The Goban and his son were seven years building the castle, and they never said a word all that time. And at the end of seven years the son was at the top, and he said, "I hear a cow lowing." And the Goban said then, "Make all strong below you, for the work is done," and they went home. The Goban never told the secret of his building, and when he was on the bed dying they wanted to get it from him, and they went in and said, "Claregalway Castle is after falling in the night." And the Goban said, "How can that be when I put a stone in and a stone out and a stone across?" So then they knew the way he built so well!

"The Goban had a wishing hat, too," Mrs. Pitt went on, "which brought him all that he desired. Isn't he an interesting person, Betty? He is really the same person, you know, as Giobniu, the smith of olden times, who made a

new sword and a new spear to replace every one that was broken in a great battle between the gods and the Fomor. Giobniu's father could stop the incoming tide with his hatchet; and Giobniu himself made the ale of eternal youth." Mrs. Pitt read in conclusion:

“ ‘ Later he became a saint, a master builder, builder of a house “ more shining than a garden; with its stars, with its sun, with its moon.” To-day he is known as the builder of the round towers of the early Christian centuries, and of the square castles of the Anglo-Normans.’ ”

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

IN THE FAR WEST

THERE is no town at Recess,—only a railway station and a neighboring hotel, set down in the midst of green trees and almost tropical flowers and shrubs. Beyond this oasis lie the treeless, brown bogs, the stony Connemara mountains, and the solemn blue loughs.

“Come on up this path, Phil. Race you to the top!”

They were returning from a walk along the bleak road beside the lough, when, not far from the hotel grounds, they saw the long slope of a mountain.

“We’ll come, too,” said Mrs. Pitt briskly. “I think there must be a marble quarry somewhere near. The Connemara marble is green and pretty, even in the rough.”

So they climbed the slope which at first was covered with moss, scanty grasses and reeds, and occasional patches of heather. Soon they came upon great bowlders strewing the way, and after that a ridge with a little poor, thin soil among the gray rocks.

“Why, potatoes have been planted, even

'way up here!" Betty exclaimed. "See!—there in those tiny, walled-in fields. There must be a village."

A boy just then made his appearance from behind a huge rock. In his hand were small pieces of green, streaked marble from a quarry and, two or three members of the party having accepted these as souvenirs, the lad became their guide, leading the way towards the huddled cottages and the quarry. He had always lived there, he said, and he good-naturedly told them about his life and his neighbors.

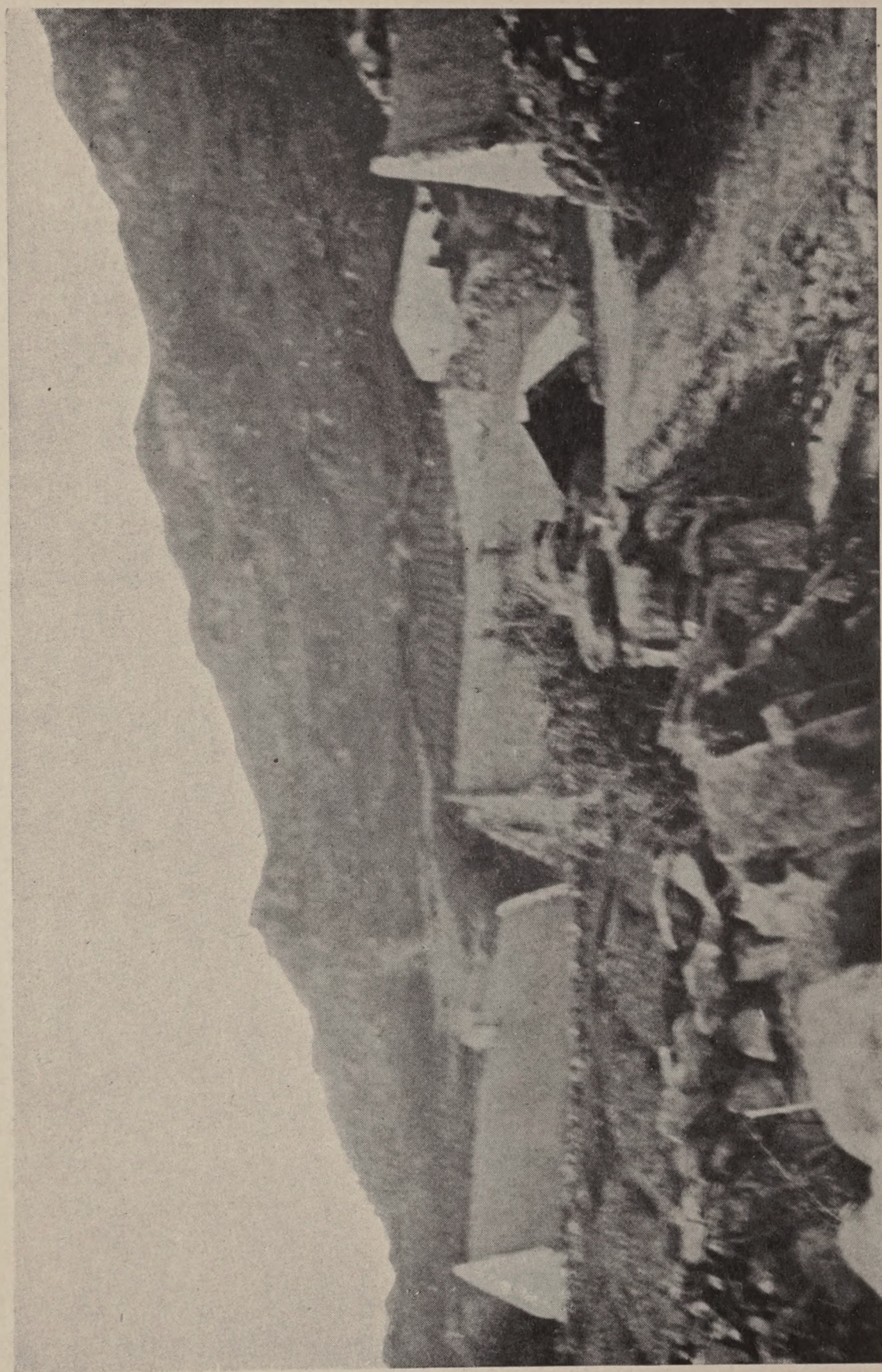
Most families keep a pig, but few can afford to kill it for their own use, he explained. They usually have to sell it to pay the bill at a shop in the town, "down beyant,"—a bill for oatmeal, tea, bacon, and a few other necessities. Of course, potatoes are the staple food; cabbage is the only other vegetable planted. Potatoes are stored in the barn for use in winter, when the women spend their days carding wool to be sent to Clifden and woven into cloth. Part of this they keep for themselves and part they sell. The children walk five miles to school, and it is three miles to the Catholic church. A lonely, poor enough place to spend one's life in! And yet, the village had had its great day when the King and Queen went up that quarry road from Recess. The King's chair is still preserved and one has to pay to see it.

“ They’re so brown and near the ground that you’d hardly know they were houses, would you? ” questioned Barbara, looking at the cabins, their stone walls chinked with peat, their roofs of smutched thatch. The huts are connected by rocky, narrow, crooked lanes, the haunts of hens, pigs, an occasional goat, or a flock of geese.

“ I wonder if this isn’t the village described by Jane Barlow in her ‘ Irish Idylls ’? ” said Mrs. Pitt. “ It answers to her description perfectly, and her village was surely not far from here. Have you ever read those tales of the Irish peasants, Betty? I think you would like them, some of them, at least. They are about Ody Rafferty who owned an ass, and generous Widdy McGurk, or Stacy Doyne and her unfortunate love affair, or poor Larry who didn’t want to seek his fortune in America. Such real people! They go right to one’s heart.”

The quarry is no longer worked and the big pieces of green marble remain just as the men left them when they went away. The quarry had given work to a number of village men, at half a crown a day, but it had been shut down for a long time. Their guide seemed to regret this in a dull sort of way; but these peasants accept things as they are, expecting little.

From the hotel porch there was a lovely view of distant blue lough and sharp mountain peaks,



AND YET, THE VILLAGE HAD ITS GREAT DAY WHEN THE KING AND QUEEN WENT UP THAT QUARRY ROAD.
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which at sunset were flooded with a wonderful golden haze. In the foreground were green lawns and many wild flowers and flowering shrubs; in the wood, behind the hotel, a nightingale sang. It was so beautiful that they reluctantly left it for the somewhat cheerless dining-room. The early morning was equally fair at Recess, and they were sorry to mount the waiting jaunting-cars for their trip across country to Leenane, on Killery Bay.

There was much laughter over the two horses, one being a perfect skeleton of a beast that had to be constantly touched with the whip, the other a sturdy nag new to this part of the country, hence, as they say in Connemara, a “thrifle *mountainy*.” They first tried hitching the fast horse to the first car, but soon found that the other jaunting-car and its passengers fell too far behind. Then it was decided to let the slow horse take the lead, restraining the energies of the “*mountainy*” beast with no small difficulty.

Their way led through a rugged region of bogs, gloomy lakes, and rocky, sharp-peaked mountains. Journeying slowly down a long, desolate valley, they found themselves among “The Twelve Pins.” These mountain peaks are very jagged and the lower slopes look as if the peculiar, thin blue smoke of the peat had been blown over them. Higher up are long

rows of ridges, where potatoes have been planted in the unfriendly soil.

After they had passed Kylemore Lake, with its wild, wooded shores and its white castle belonging to the Duke of Manchester, Mrs. Pitt questioned one of the drivers about the fairies. Did he believe in them? she asked. The man would not confess that he had any faith in them himself, but he knew many who had. Like most Irish peasants, when questioned by foreigners, he insisted that the fairies "do be all dead now." Unless the Irish feel very friendly towards the stranger and are assured of his sympathy, no stories of the "good people" will be forthcoming, as it is deemed unlucky to talk of them. Mr. Yeats quotes a man who said, "They always mind their own affairs and I always mind mine." But it is even as the same author has said: "Though peasants profess to doubt many supernatural things and will insist that they have no belief in fairies, the underlying idea of their reality is nevertheless there, for the fairies 'stand to reason.'" That their driver shared this faith was proved by a story he told them.

"It's meself and a gossoon were afther thravelin' this very same road at wan or two o'clock in the morning. Sure I've thraveled it airly and late, I have that. Faith, I've never seen one o' the 'good people' or any onnatural thing

except this wan time, but thin we did get a frightening up, like. Now put an ear on yourself, for I'm afther telling yez a great story. It was chill like, and we were comin' along smart whin Jim he seen somethin' white near the road ahead, and just thin the horse I had, she gives a jump past, for she seen it, too. It's meself was for goin' back to see what it was, not believin' in 'good people,' ye understhand. But Jim he wouldn't be left to hould the horse, so we turned and druv back, the both on us. There in the middle of the road stood a white cow, and sure she did be the wan onnatural critter I ever seen." The man laughed uproariously as he leaned over to flick a fly from the horse's back.

But, although he pretended to ridicule the fairies, he told tales of one of the most interesting of their number, the leprehaun, or fairy cobbler. This fairy is always dressed in a little green coat and a scarlet cap, and on his tiny shoes are elegant buckles. If you are lucky enough to see him at all, he will be sitting under some bush by the roadside or in a field, either making or mending a shoe. He usually has with him a wonderful purse full of fairy money, and the thing to do is to snatch this or to make the fairy tell you the whereabouts of the "crock of gold"; but, unless you are very, very careful he will divert your attention and then es-

cape. The leprehaun is both sly and clever, and so far no man has ever stolen his treasure.

This talk reminded Mrs. Pitt of a song about the leprehaun:

“In a shady nook, one moonlight night,
A leprehaun I spied;
With scarlet cap and coat of green,
A cruiskeen by his side.
'Twas tick, tack, tick, his hammer went,
Upon a weeny shoe;
And I laughed to think of his purse of gold,—
But the fairy was laughing too!

“With tiptoe step and beating heart,
Quite softly I drew nigh:
There was mischief in his merry face,
A twinkle in his eye.
He hammered, and sang with tiny voice,
And drank his mountain dew;
And I laughed to think he was caught at last;
But the fairy was laughing too!

“As quick as thought I seized the elf.
“Your fairy purse!” I cried.
“The purse!” he said—“’tis in her hand—
That lady at your side.”
I turned to look; the elf was off,
Then what was I to do?
Oh, I laughed to think what a fool I’d been;
And the fairy was laughing too!”

“I’m going to watch for him all the time,” Betty declared. “I’d love to see him, but I don’t believe I’d try to steal his purse.”

“Just give me a chance. I bet I could do it!” put in John.

At that moment they saw beautiful Killery Bay below them, and began to descend the steep road to Leenane.

At the sportsmen's inn, near the bay, they had a delicious luncheon of trout which had been caught that morning. Later they followed the bend of the bay, past a camp where a game was being played, with home-made mallets and tin-cans for balls,—Barbara thought it was intended to be croquet. Coming to a steep road leading back into the country, they followed it up to the Leenane National School.

“Shall we go in and visit the school, Betty? You and John and I? No, Barbara, you and Philip walk on up the hill; it would frighten them if we all went in, and you will have other chances of seeing an Irish school. We'll overtake you in a few minutes.”

It is probably not often that any one visits this school, unless it be the much-feared inspector, and the schoolmaster was very prompt in answering their knock. He gave the visitors permission to watch the proceedings, but he had no chairs to offer. While he endeavored to induce the awe-struck, staring children to take up the ordinary routine, Mrs. Pitt, John, and Betty looked about them.

It was not a large room; in the corner was a

medium-sized grate, and the whitewashed walls were adorned with three large maps, one of Europe, one of Palestine, and one of the British Isles. There were also the "General Lesson," a white placard with five or six printed paragraphs regarding good conduct, and several pasteboard advertisements of favorite brands of tobacco, of biscuits, or of tea. The master's desk was at one end of the room, the boys' forms, or benches, facing him; the girls sat with their backs turned to the boys, in front of a young woman who teaches sewing and knitting. A few children sat along the wall, near a door leading to a smaller room where cooking is done.

The visitors' attention was called to two small girls who were standing before the master, reciting Longfellow's "Village Blacksmith." Mrs. Pitt suspected that this was done as a compliment to John and Betty, but the children knew the poem very well. Three boys were reading Grimm's Fairy Tales, and those in the second class were laboring over a strange selection, entitled "The Beds and Sleep of Animals." The master, after permitting a pupil to read a paragraph or two, would interrupt him to ask, "Now, what do you think is meant by that, at all?" He was patient and painstaking, but sometimes his explanations were as odd as the children's. He was fond of quoting Latin which

no one understood. His discipline seemed to be excellent, though the children may have been merely frightened into silence.

When a recitation was over, there was a strange thud of bare feet as the pupils went back to their seats; only one boy in school wore shoes and stockings. He was Patrick Joyce, who was very clever and answered most of the questions. Tall Patrick shared the honors with a smaller boy who had very red hair and big, intelligent brown eyes. The children were dressed in any clothes available, regardless of their original intention for male or female attire. One boy, who wore unspeakably ragged clothes, had a strange, blank expression in his eyes, and, although he came forward and stood with the others, he took no part in the reading and was asked no questions.

To the master's query, "Is it any interest you'd be feeling to see the copybooks?" Mrs. Pitt replied that it would give them great pleasure. The master thereupon called out sharply: "First boy, there! Fetch thim copybooks."

These were fairly neat, some containing sums in fractions and others essays or compositions, one being a description of the battle of Clontarf, and another a recital of the daily doings of the writer,—going to mass of a Sunday and afterward attending a dance at Leenane.

The master followed his guests to the door,

and stood there a few moments answering questions. School is out at three-thirty, he told them; the children usually arrive about nine-thirty in the morning, although they are not marked late if they reach the schoolhouse before ten-thirty. Many of them have long distances to come, sometimes five or six miles. They are obliged to attend school between the ages of six and fourteen, but they may enter when they are three. Their only vacation is six weeks, "about August," probably during harvest time. The children must buy their own books, and if they are too poor they have to look over a neighbor's shoulder.

"There's Phil on ahead!" cried John, when the school door had closed, and away he ran up the hill. Betty and Mrs. Pitt followed, soon overtaken by the scholars who had just been dismissed. Most of them carried quaint schoolbags which they keep slung over their shoulders even in school, taking out books as needed. Several boys passed Mrs. Pitt and Betty, Patrick Joyce among them, but the girls followed closely behind them, either from curiosity or because they had not the courage to pass.

"Let's follow one of them home," suggested Betty. "We could ask for a drink of water, and then we could see where they live."

So when Annie Rose (aged about eight years) and little Lottie (four or five) let down some bars

and started up a grassy lane, leading to a farmhouse, Mrs. Pitt and Betty followed them. The children were frightened and ran on ahead. When the farmhouse came in sight, they were standing in the doorway holding fast to the skirts of a motherly person whose black shawl framed her honest face.

“ Good-afternoon,” said Mrs. Pitt pleasantly. “ I wonder if you have two glasses of milk for some thirsty people? ”

“ Faith an’ I have, ma’am! Come in and set yez down till I fetch it.”

This was plainly the home of progressive, thrifty people. There were several barns and sheds, and the house had two rooms, entered from a tiny hall. Mrs. Joyce ushered them into the room at the right, which had a dining-table, several good chairs, and some flowers at the casement windows. On the walls were family portraits, a few old Biblical prints, and a shelf holding two good luster pitchers and some other china.

Mrs. Joyce soon returned with the milk, which she poured for her visitors.

“ It’s good milk,” Betty remarked shyly. “ Have you a cow? ”

“ We have, miss, plaze God. It’s not everyone in Ireland has such good fortune, either. But himself has always been a hard-working man, not afther taking the dhrink too often, so

we've fairly prospered, we have. There's himself now, out in the potato rows. We've some good land, and there's me own flower garden, beyond the boreen; the childer made it. I've fourteen childer, ma'am, all living, glory be,—two out in 'the States,' and me ouldest daughter in London, nursing. Sure I've Heaven to praise for me blessings. Is it the kitchen ye'll be wishin' to see, miss? Ye can, miss! This way."

The kitchen, the real living apartment, had a dirt floor on which the hens clucked; near the huge fireplace, where the peat smoldered, several children and a dog were huddled. The chimney was whitewashed as far up as one could reach; above that the great beams of the ceiling were black from the smoke. There were saddles hanging on pegs, a dresser full of china, and four sturdy chairs.

"Why! there's Patrick Joyce!" Betty exclaimed. "Is he your son? We heard him read at school."

It was late afternoon when they bade good-bye to Mrs. Joyce, joined Barbara and the boys at the end of the boreen, and went down the hill again towards Leenane. The mountains looked purple now and the golden haze, which they were learning to love, was again creeping over the fields and valleys.

Presently they saw a woman, with two great

bags of peat, come down the mountain side. She left one bag by the road and struggled along, the other on her back. She made a picturesque figure in her scarlet petticoat and shawled head, as she bent under her burden. Soon a tall, thin boy followed her, bounding over the hummocks with the second peat bag on his back. His clothing was a strange mixture—a scant, short, black skirt, a gingham apron, and a blue jacket with brass buttons. He, too, was doubled over by the weight of his load, his eerie figure silhouetted against the sky. It was the half-witted boy they had seen at the school.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

IN THE "GENTLE COUNTRY," WITH "THE GOOD
PEOPLE"

A CLERGYMAN and his wife from London and a Scotch couple from Manchester sat at the same table with Mrs. Pitt and her party while they were at Leenane. They were all anglers, as their conversation made plain enough.

"Are you fishing this morning?" from the clergyman.

"Oh, no, there's no wind," replied the Scotchman, conscious of superior knowledge.

"Ah!" observed the Rev. Mr. H., in the tone of one who makes note of information.

"There'll perhaps be some sketching or something of that sort," the Scotchman suggested.

It is easy to tell the adept at fishing. The rector and his wife, ambling through Ireland in mild enjoyment of their annual holiday, desired to seem keen on fishing, but were obviously amateurs. The Scotch couple had settled down in a favorite spot, with an eye on the weather, perfectly united in their devotion to angling.

The valley of the Eriff, through which Mrs.

Pitt and the others drove on their way to Westport, is famous for its salmon fishing. Occasionally they saw two or three men, flinging their lines while knee-deep in the little stream. Of course, John wanted to try his luck.

"I wish I could say yes," said Mrs. Pitt, "but we really haven't the time, and there is a big fee. How would you like paying £1 a day for fishing? There are keepers here and on the Duke of Manchester's property, who watch the river to make sure that nobody fishes who hasn't paid. They patrol certain beats on foot, and I believe there is also an overseer who rides on horseback along the stream. I'm afraid you would hardly be able to escape detection."

"If I had half a chance, I'd show you!" protested John. "These fellows can't be everywhere; I could dodge 'em. I'd duck behind a rock if one came along."

But Mrs. Pitt was firm, and they drove on through the lonely valley, the broad peat bogs bordering the road. The few huts which they passed had networks of rope laid over the thatched roofs, held down by rows of stones at the eaves.

"The haystacks are fixed like that, too," remarked Barbara. "I suppose it's shockingly windy here in winter."

Now and then they overtook a peasant driv-

ing his donkey loaded with heavy panniers of peat, which sells at Westport for about sixpence the "kish," or basketful; several times ragged children scampered out from huts at the approach of the jaunting-cars, and ran along beside the strangers, saying nothing but holding out appealing hands. Much later they came in sight of Clew Bay with its islands, and noticed, on their left, the high pointed top of Croagh Patrick.

"Isn't that the mountain where St. Patrick killed the snakes?" asked Betty eagerly.

"Yes, the tradition is that he collected all the serpents in Ireland, carried them to the top of Croagh Patrick, and then drove them into the sea. There's even a certain hollow in the mountain side where the snakes tried to hide to escape destruction. It was here that the saint began his mission to Ireland, but, when he saw how bleak and desolate Connemara looked from the top of the mountain, he decided not to enter it. St. Patrick, being tired and thirsty from his climb up Croagh Patrick, drew water from a holy well which suddenly sprang forth, only to disappear after he had refreshed himself. Its existence was unknown until long afterwards, when a good priest chanced to lift a stone marked with a cross and thus it was rediscovered. There are two holy trout in the well. One day a soldier caught one

of them and took it home, intending to eat it; but no sooner had he put it on the gridiron than it vanished. When he went to the well again, he found the trout there as usual, but with the distinct mark of a hot iron bar on its side."

A chapel stands on the summit of Croagh Patrick, and every year, on the last Sunday in July, there is a great pilgrimage up the mountain, this being one of Ireland's most sacred shrines. Irish people tell the story of how, during the six months that the chapel was being built, not a drop of rain fell. This proved a boon to the workmen, who had to carry all building materials from Westport.

This chief town of County Mayo is of the familiar Irish type except for "the Mall," a pretty broad street lined with trees, having a tiny brook running down the center. After lunching at a decayed hotel in this picturesque street, they took the afternoon train to Sligo.

"Sort of a slimy name, isn't it?" ventured John. "I bet we won't like it, and there'll be no train to get away in."

It seemed strange to come into a large town again, after the wilds of Connemara. John was quite right. They did not like Sligo and straightway desired to leave its noisy, dirty Saturday afternoon streets, its beautiful but depressing old abbey, half sunk into the peaty soil, and its dark hotel. Mrs. Pitt tried to hire

a motor-car for the following day, meaning to run down to Carrick-on-Shannon, where she had friends; but every Irishman who kept a garage (there were three) insisted that no motor-car ever left his premises on Sunday. Inquiries at the station resulted in the cheerless news that there was no Sunday train in any direction, neither would there be another that evening. For a time it looked as if they must spend the week-end at Sligo.

"O dear, I never wanted to get away from any place so much in all my life!" declared Betty, at dinner. "Couldn't we drive somewhere?"

Here was one thing they could do, Mrs. Pitt decided; they could drive to Bundoran. They all preferred traveling in the vicinity of twenty miles on an open jaunting-car, through the heat of a June day, to staying in Sligo; and they were the more content to be on the road since it led through "gentle" country, meaning country in high favor with the "good people."

"There's Ben Bulbin," said Mrs. Pitt, pointing to a hill before them as they began to climb a steep road. "On the side of that mountain there is 'a small white square in the limestone. No mortal will ever touch it, no sheep or goat has pulled grass near it, for it is the door of fairy-land!' Now, you know why there are so many fairies about here, and why mysteri-

ous things happen. Mr. Yeats tells us all about it and he knows, of course. In the middle of the night the door swings open and the fairies pour out for their expeditions. Many people have been kidnaped, most often babies or brides; sometimes they are allowed to come back for a short visit after seven years with the fairies, sometimes they are never seen again. One woman, when she came back from fairy-land, had no toes left, having danced them all off! ”

“ Oh, tell us more, please! ” cried Betty, as Mrs. Pitt, complaining of the heat, paused to take off her coat. “ I just love to hear about the ‘ good people ’! I hope you know millions of stories! ”

“ Well,” laughed Mrs. Pitt, “ I used to be able to quote a good bit from Mr. Yeats, and if I forget, I have only to turn to his ‘ Celtic Twilight.’ Here it is in my handbag, you see, for I was anticipating a demand for fairy lore to-day. First of all, I want to explain what a difference there is between Scotch and Irish fairies. Mr. Yeats says [and here the book was opened]: ‘ For their gay and graceful doings you must go to Ireland; for their deeds of terror to Scotland. Our Irish fairy terrors have about them something of make-believe. When a peasant strays into an enchanted hut, and is made to turn a corpse all night on a spit before

the fire, we do not feel anxious; we know he will wake in the midst of a green field, the dew on his old coat. In Scotland it is altogether different. You (the Scotch) have soured the naturally excellent disposition of ghosts and goblins. . . . You—you will make no terms with the spirits of fire and earth and air and water. You have made the Darkness your enemy. We—we exchange civilities with the world beyond.' Even in various parts of Ireland, spirits have different characteristics, it seems. In the east they are usually matter-of-fact and gloomy, returning to avenge a wrong, announce a death, or sometimes to pay a bill; in the west spirits are weird and hilarious, using strange disguises. A certain old man returned in the form of a rabbit to rob his own garden. In some villages these spirits are believed to lurk at every turning. A man once cried out: 'If I pass by the hill of Dunboy, old Captain Burney may look out on me. If I go round by the water, and up by the steps, there is the headless one and another on the quays, and a new one under the old churchyard wall. If I go right round the other way, Mrs. Stewart is appearing at Hillside Gate and the devil himself is in the Hospital Lane.' "

" They seem to be all mixed up together, don't they, Mother,—ghosts, spirits, leprehauns, fairies, and all the rest? "

“ Oh, I adore them all! ” Betty cried, impatient for Mrs. Pitt to go on.

“ Rosses and Drumcliff are both very ‘ gentle ’ places,” Mrs. Pitt continued. “ They are near here; we shall pass through Drumcliff presently, with its Celtic cross and its battered round tower. Both these places are overhung by Ben Bulben and Knocknarea Mountains, Ben Bulben being famous for its hawks as well as for its door into fairyland. There’s an old rhyme, too:

“ ‘ But for Benbulben and Knocknarea,
Many a poor sailor’d be cast away.’ ”

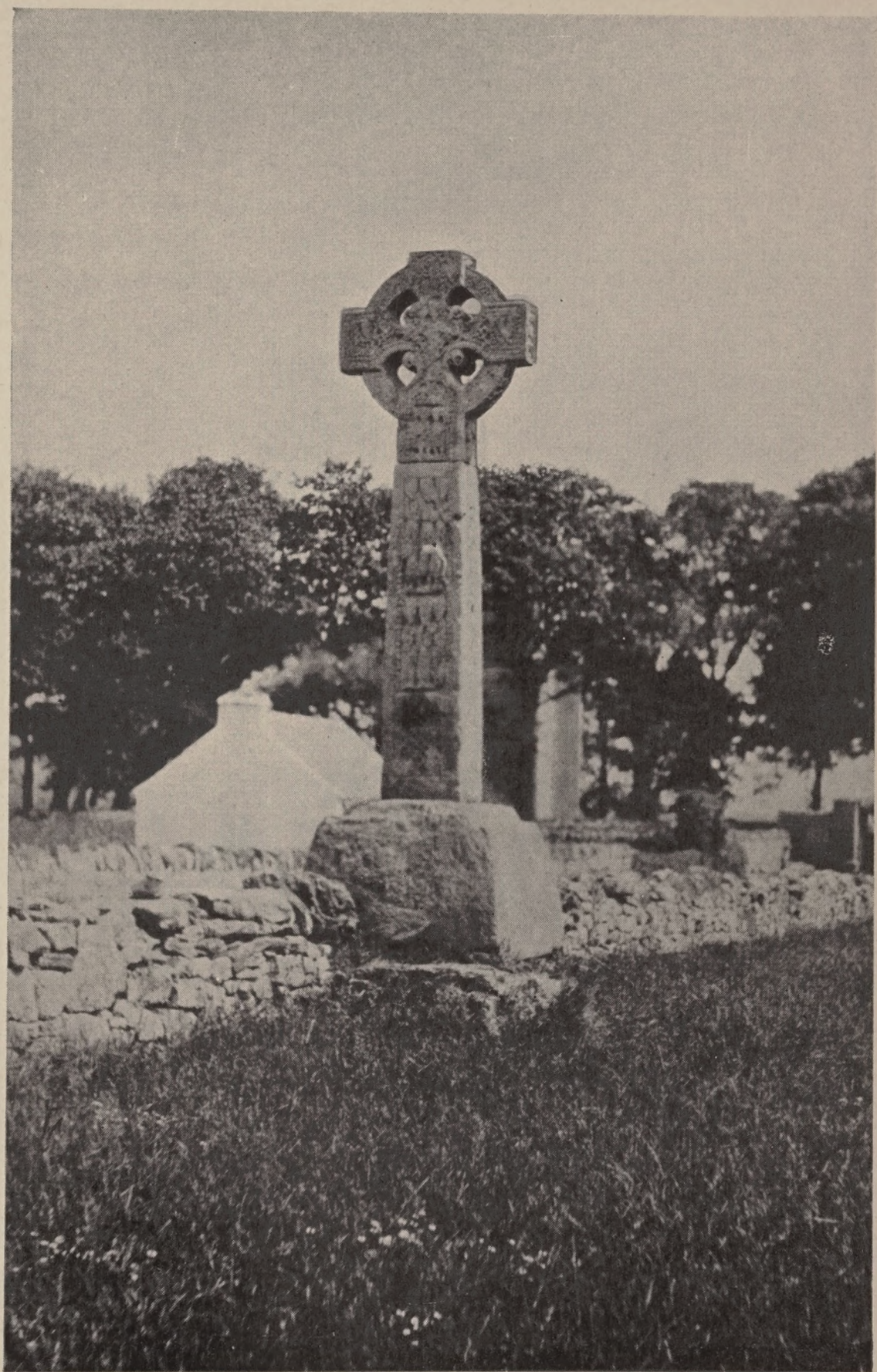
“ On Knocknarea is a wondrous White Lady who wanders under the ‘ broad cloud night-cap.’ Perhaps she is Queen Maive herself. But no matter who she is, every one must believe in her, for she was seen not long ago. It was a herdsboy against whom her skirts brushed, and soon after ‘ he fell down and was dead three days.’ About five miles south of Sligo is a gloomy lake called the Heart Lake, because of its form. Snipe, heron, and wild duck flock there, but there are stranger things; out of this lake may come the same fairy troop which sometimes pushes away the great white stone on the slope of Ben Bulben. Some men were once trying to drain the lake, when suddenly

one of them fancied he saw his cottage on fire. Looking around, startled, each man plainly saw his own home burning. All hurried away, only to find everything well with their families, so they knew it had been only 'faery glammor.' But they did not go on with the draining of the lake."

"H'm!" said John. "P'r'aps that old O'Donoghue has a castle down there."

"Don't interrupt, John," pleaded his sister. "You know O'Donoghue lives at Killarney."

"The fairies spirited Ossian away to 'Tirnan-og,' you remember, and kept him there three hundred years. To the fairies there is no such thing as time. They never grow old because their joy is endless. Two of them once came to a peasant's hut and danced for days, on and on in an upper room. The poor owner, not daring to live in the house meantime, finally went up and told them that the priest was coming. Usually unearthly creatures are very much frightened when a priest is mentioned; but these fairies calmly went back to their own country, where they could dance until 'God shall burn up the world with a kiss.' Occasionally a person is born with 'faery life,' which is endless, but the gift isn't always desirable. There is a story of a woman who traveled all over the country looking for a lake deep enough to drown her 'faery life' in."



DRUMCLIFF, WITH ITS CELTIC CROSS.—*Page 219.*

“ What is ‘ Tir-nan-og ’? ” Philip asked.

“ It’s ‘ the Land of the Ever-Youthful,’ where the fairies dwell; where the huts are not so unlike earthly ones, except that the thatch never leaks nor do the whitewashed walls ever grow dingy.”

Drumcliff is a great place for omens, and the one which the people are most happy to see is the ancient boat in which St. Columba comes floating in from the sea, the sign of abundant harvest.

“ Mother, what are sheogues? ” inquired Barbara.

“ Fairies, dear; just another name for them.”

“ Mrs. Pitt, why do fairies like raths? Rathes were really forts, weren’t they? ”

“ Yes, prehistoric forts, Betty. I think it would be hard to explain why the ‘ good people ’ chose them as their homes. No one knows anything more than the fact that there are many fairy raths. The famous Irish harper, Carolan, went to sleep on a fairy rath and that put the marvelous fairy music into his head.”

“ What are banshees? ” John demanded.

“ Well, banshees are the least agreeable of the fairy relatives. They—but I can’t stop to tell you about them now. Driver, we’ll stop for luncheon. Yes, over there in the shade. Come and help me unpack the sandwiches, children. Later I’ll tell you a banshee story and

also read you a splendid one about 'Donegal's Doubter,' from Mr. Yeats. Don't drop those bottles of ginger beer, John. Take care!"

Luncheon being over, they lingered in the shade to discuss banshees with Mrs. Pitt.

"What do they look like?" asked Betty.
"They're women, aren't they?"

"Yes, usually old women, with loose white draperies and streaming gray hair. They wave their arms about, dog one's footsteps, and often utter most distressing cries. They are said to appear before a death; but it is not every family which can have a banshee, only those of great antiquity and fame. It's rather a doubtful privilege, I should think,—the possession of a banshee."

"What do the old lady banshees do?" inquired John.

"Most uncanny, unpleasant things! In tales where people have been summoned to the house of a relative who is ill, the banshee appears before them on the road, screeching or 'keening,' pointing towards the house. The sick person is sure to die soon after this. There are many records of banshees warning women of the deaths of their husbands at sea. In Kerry, a number of people once met for some sort of merry-making. When 'the cry' was heard, several rich merchants began to fear for their lives; but they need not have been alarmed, for

banshees never attend 'new people.' One of the O'Sullivans, then a day laborer but once a prince, had fallen ill. When asked if he were dead, a neighbor of his replied: 'No, sir, he is not dead; but he soon will be. We heard the voice last night.' Some of the old superstitious people still talk of banshees. I confess that I have tried to encourage peasants to discuss them with me, and other folk tales of weird happenings or doings of the 'good people'; but it is useless. These things have largely been forgotten even by the aged people, driven out of mind by the National Schools, Father Mathew, and modern newspapers. Even if one is lucky enough to speak the Gaelic tongue, it is next to impossible to find a trace of the old belief in the fairies. Mr. Yeats says that the folk tales are 'like a mist on the coming of night that is scattered away by the light breath of wind'; but he thinks fairy and ghost tales will be 'always going and never gone,' for they have the 'four winds of desire: Love, Fortune, Adventure, Wonder.'

"Now I'll read you what happened to 'Donegal's Doubter,'" said Mrs. Pitt, taking up her book once more; "then we must start on. Here it is, on page 141, 'The Man and His Boots.'

" 'There was a doubter in Donegal, and he would not hear of ghosts or sheogues, and there

was a house in Donegal that had been haunted as long as man could remember, and this is the story of how the house got the better of the man. The man came into the house and lighted a fire in the room under the haunted one, and took off his boots and set them on the hearth, and stretched out his feet and warmed himself. For a time he prospered in his unbelief; but a little while after the night had fallen, and everything had got very dark, one of his boots began to move. It got up off the floor and gave a kind of slow jump towards the door, and then the other boot did the same, and after that the first boot jumped again. And thereupon it struck the man that an invisible being had got into his boots, and was now going away in them. When the boots reached the door they went upstairs slowly, and then the man heard them go tramp, tramp round the haunted room over his head. A few minutes passed, and he could hear them again upon the stairs, and after that in the passage outside, and then one of them came in at the door, and the other gave a jump past it and came in, too. They jumped along towards him, and then one got up and hit him, and afterwards the other hit him, and so on, until they drove him out of the room, and finally out of the house. In this way he was kicked out by his own boots, and Donegal was avenged upon its doubter. It is not recorded whether the invisible being was a ghost or one of the Sidhe, but the fantastic nature of the vengeance is like the work of the Sidhe who live in the heart of fantasy.' "

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

TRAVELING TOWARDS THE NORTH

“ I LIKE it,” said Betty, standing on the lawn in front of the Bundoran hotel and looking across the cliffs to the water. “ I’m crazy about those sand dunes where the pale green grass grows! Oh, John, let me go with you when you play golf! Doesn’t it look nice and cool out there on the rocks in the wind! I heard a man say there are big caves.”

The boys lost no time in getting out on the links while the others wandered here and there, enjoying the sea air and the fine views. It was surprising how soon they settled down to drawing-rooms, electric lights, and elaborate *table d’hôte*, after the primitive accommodations they had had in Connemara.

“ It’s rather different from that night at Leenane when we had bacon and eggs, isn’t it? ” laughed Barbara, a waiter at her elbow with sweetbreads.

Their table, too, was placed where they could see the Donegal Mountains across the bay; in the evening light they were alluringly blue and hazy.

“ Donegal! ” said Mrs. Pitt. “ How I wish we had time to explore it! There’s where we might really find primitive conditions. Many people still speak Gaelic there, and Seumas MacManus has assured us that they still gather around the peat fires on winter evenings to hear stories of fairies and banshees and giants. Not many years ago, most of the five hundred people living on bleak Tory Island had never visited the mainland. The few traveled ones carried back, as great curiosities, leaves and branches pulled from trees. Achill Island is still primitive. There are tales there of seals possessing human souls, and of a mermaid. Formerly there was only one hat on the island. It was kept on a pole, near the sound, and whenever a man was going to cross to the mainland he climbed the pole and took down the hat. On returning, he replaced it for the use of the next traveler.

“ Donegal is also famed as the birthplace of St. Columba. His father was the great-grandson of an old king, Niall-of-the-Nine-Hostages, from whom are descended the O’Neills. Niall was the most warlike of all the pagan kings, and when he died, in 405, his eight sons had conquered much territory and were very powerful. All but two of the Ard-ri’s, between the time of Niall-of-the-Nine-Hostages down to Brian Boru, were chosen from this family. So

it is clear that St. Columba might have had high station and honors accorded him, had he not chosen to give them up for the sake of his mission. The famous work, 'Annals of the Four Masters,' compiled from the books of older writers, was done at a Franciscan monastery in Donegal."

Two mornings later they left their luxurious quarters at Bundoran to drive through Ballyshannon, famous for its salmon leap, and on to the little town of Belleek, four miles beyond.

Not far from Bundoran they passed a camp of soldiers, raw recruits who were being drilled by young officers. One squad was practising leaping over a wooden "horse" and another was handling guns, apparently aiming them at the passers-by.

"Look at those kids!" burst out John indignantly. "What do they think they're doing, anyhow—pointing their guns at us like that? D'you think they ever saw a gun before?"

The road was beautiful and their driver pleasantly talkative, though his accent made it difficult to follow him. Mrs. Pitt had been questioning him about the fairies. Translating his remarks into clearer English, they ran something like this:

"The 'good people,' is it? Ah, it's bad luck to be always blamin' 'em, yer ladyship. I never seen any o' thim meself, but there's thim near

here as has, and has heerd the banshees; but I don't think there's been any for about a hundred years. There used to be fairies in the ould days. They used to carry people out o' their houses at night, and they would be afther the animals, too, poor craythers! I know a man that had his horses taken out of the stables on him. One night they took a man and set him on a horse and drove him out into the night entirely. When he was found, he was three miles from home and didn't know where he'd been at all. Up in thim hills yonder, they do be saying there were two great animals in a deep lake. A colleen—McLoughlin was the name of her—started out one day with a dagger to kill them, but she never came back, and so her father and another man wint off to the hills to find her. When they got there one of the dragons come up out of the deep lake, an' they chased it, and just as it was going to cross the threshold and go into the house itself, they cut off the head. And what do yez think, but it was the colleen herself! Over where she is buried, in the mountains, it says:

“ ‘ Tail like a fish, head like a man, and——’ Sure I’m afther forgetting the rest. It happened a hundred and eighty-eight years ago.”

Near Ballyshannon they passed a field, in which was an inclosure where trees and bushes grow undisturbed.

“ Is that a rath? ” Barbara inquired.

Of course the jarvey had a story about this, too. An old bachelor who owned the estate ordered his steward to cut down the trees and throw the land into one field. The steward, a Scotchman, replied:

“ Twelve wee men guard that place and I canna touch it. Weel ye ken I’ll do onything else ye order, but not that.”

The owner, greatly angered at this, took an ax and himself went out to cut down a tree. No sooner had he touched it, however, than he fell down as if he were dead. A second and a third time he made the attempt, always with the same result. Then he lay helpless, and doctors were summoned from all the near-by towns. “ Much money, many doctors,” but they could do nothing, and the man lay barely alive for three weeks. One morning some one found a mysterious note placed at the foot of his bed. This, when opened, was found to contain directions for building a wall around the strange inclosure in the field. Every man in the neighborhood helped in the work. As the last stone was put in place, the master recovered. He lived seven years afterwards, and died on the anniversary of his unhappy attempt to cut down the trees.

Turning in his seat, the jarvey concluded, with all seriousness: “ The estate thin belonged

to a doctor, milady, a doctor believin' in nayther Hivin nor Hell. Just where ye see that tree in bloom," pointing with his whip to a white hawthorn within the inclosure, "he was afther thryin' to cut down a tree. But whin he had sthruck at it, he was no betther nor a goose with a broken wing. Afther that he let it alone, and other folk, they've let it alone, too. It's no place to go diggin' at all. Sure I meself helped to build the wall, forty-five year ago."

Still another thrilling tale was among that jarvey's store. He had once been hero of a horse race. Pointing out a route over the fields, where farmers used to race their horses, he told his story.

"Two ladies from Dublin sint up for their horse, milady, and they showed me how to hould him back first time over the course so as to boggle the bookies, and whin to let him go. They stood up wid a red parasol, and I knew by the way they waved it what I was to do. Odds were twinty to one against my horse, and aftherwards five hundred to one, but he came in as far ahead as we are from that house—one hundred yards ahead, milady! The bookies were crazy! The gossoons they put me on their shoulders and carried me; the ladies won a lot of money and they gave me £35. I'm remembered by that race to this day! But it was

thirty-five years ago, and I wasn't heavy thin and I had no gray hair!"

Close by a stream, in a hollow, stands the Belleek Pottery factory. It was interesting to go through the rooms and see the various processes: first, how the material is made from a fine-grained, white stone brought from Cornwall; then mixed with water in a vat where it is ground for six days, coming out the consistency of thick cream of a soft gray color. There are two firings in immense ovens, one lasting forty-eight hours and the other twenty. After the decorations are colored by hand, there is a final burning for ten hours. Girls and men are employed in making and applying the decorations of roses, shamrocks, and other designs. It seems to be a clean and pleasant kind of work, and the factory is airy and sunny.

"I must take home two of these shamrock cups and saucers!" declared Betty, when they were in the salesroom. "Mother will love them as much as I do!" But neither Betty nor Mrs. Pitt realized how hard it would be to travel with such highly-glazed, fragile souvenirs.

Leaving Belleek about noon that day, they journeyed in leisurely fashion down to Bundoran Junction, their train drawn by a neat little engine, named "Daisy." There a smart

green and black engine, rejoicing in the name, "Snowdrop," picked them up and whirled them on to Londonderry, or "Derry," as the Irish call it.

"I've seen 'Lily' and 'Jupiter,' too," remarked Philip, as they giggled over the names of Irish engines. "But 'Snowdrop' is the fastest."

Derry is a smoky, busy place, built at the foot of hills, with Lough Foyle not far away. It has a fine old city wall of unusual thickness, and seven of its gates are still standing. The largest and most interesting of these, Bishopsgate, is shaped a bit like London's old Temple Bar. Bishopsgate has curious insignia carved over the doors, and the keystone of the arch is a man's head.

"You know his age," remarked John. "The old fellow's got the date, 1689, on his forehead!"

In the vestibule of St. Columba's Cathedral is a shell which fell near this church during the great siege in 1688. It contained the challenge to which the Derrymen made the well-known reply: "No Surrender!"

"It was one of the most famous sieges in Irish or British history," said Mrs. Pitt, as they were lingering in the cathedral yard; "it lasted one hundred and five days. The Derrymen fought with terrible odds against them—



BISHOPSGATE HAS CURIOUS INSIGNIA CARVED OVER THE DOORS, AND THE KEYSTONE OF THE ARCH IS A MAN'S HEAD.—*Page 232.*

poor walls, no competent commanders, lack of provisions and of ammunition—but they were helped and encouraged by the women. They never dreamed of surrender, and succeeded in holding the town for King William and Protestantism. Let's walk on the walls now. I'll show you one or two of the old guns, and the statue to the Reverend George Walker."

Near the point where the heaviest firing was, during the siege, there is now a tall column topped by a statue of this clergyman, who, being chosen one of the governors of the town, organized and led the Derrymen. In one hand he holds a Bible; his other hand points down the bay.

They had several rides upon the queer little trams which horses draw slowly up and down Londonderry's main street. The route is surely less than a mile in length. In spite of the apparent bustle and the soft-coal smoke, the street was not sufficiently exciting for these tram rides long to interest the young people. The morning was very hot, also. It was a great relief when Betty discovered something really thrilling, directly opposite their hotel.

"It's a 'long car,' " she cried, pointing to a strange vehicle painted bright yellow. "I've been wanting to see one ever since we came to Ireland. See, John! See the sideways seats,

just like a jaunting-car's seats, only longer! Let's go over nearer! "

From the driver, they learned that it was really a long car and that it was over a hundred years old, always having been owned by one family. Although it bears evidences of age, the car is still strong and makes regular trips through certain parts of the city.

" Well, I am glad you saw it, Betty, for I fancy there aren't many left in Ireland. Years ago, ' long cars ' were the regular and only means of traveling through the country. In 1815, an Italian, named Bianconi (by the way, Marconi is related to this family), started the first coaching company to run ' long cars ' over various regular routes. Every one used them, and Bianconi became rich and far-famed. Mr. and Mrs. Hall tell us in their book, published in 1842, that ' persons of the highest respectability ' traveled in these cars; they then passed through one hundred and twenty-eight towns in the south, but the service had not been extended to the north of Ireland. The cars varied in size, carrying from four to sixteen passengers; the number of horses was from one to four; and the fare, over the roughest of the roads, was twopence farthing a mile. Passengers were furnished with ' dry and comfortable horse-hair cushions and aprons,' and in wet weather Mr. Bianconi never allowed his cars

to travel more than two stages without changing the cushions. This was surely considerate! Mr. and Mrs. Hall go to much trouble to convince us that the cars are both comfortable and safe; and to the man who had formerly to walk, they were clearly a great saving of time. A few years ago we would have found a number of these cars in Connemara, but now they have almost disappeared. I sometimes regret progress. If we only could command its advantages when we chose, how very nice it would be to cling to old customs between whiles! ”

Having an hour before their train left, Betty begged to be permitted to go into a shop displaying the enticing sign, “ Ices.” They asked a woman what varieties they might have and she, smiling pleasantly, answered, “ Vanilla, just! ”

“ Oh, dear! ” began Betty, “ that’s about the only kind I don’t like. I do miss ice-cream and ice-water so, when it’s hot like this! ”

Americans meet with great difficulties in trying to get ice-water in Ireland. Sometimes, at a modern hotel in a large city, pitchers of it will promptly appear after an order is given, the ice clinking deliciously; at other times it will take about fifteen or twenty minutes to obtain a tiny glass of cracked ice. One warm morning a good-sized bowl of it stood ready upon their breakfast table; but it was long be-

fore the waiter could be persuaded to bring any water to put it in, he first having brought hot water, by mistake!

The coast line from "Derry" to Portrush affords fine views of the ocean and the rugged cliffs of this northern shore. Near the railway station at Portrush, a typical seaside resort where the summer cottages were being opened, they found the tram waiting to carry them out to the Giant's Causeway.

"This is said to have been the first electric tram-line in the world," remarked Mrs. Pitt. "They are extraordinarily little trams, aren't they?"

"This was the first car they ever ran, all right," agreed John. "I wish they could see this in the U. S. A."

But his sister retorted: "This isn't different from real cars, except it's shorter and the seats are nearer together. And don't you remember the horse-cars in New York?"

They crossed the town and were soon out in the country, the open fields to their right and great cliffs to their left. Far, far below was a beach with white sand, or chalk cliffs, or huge rocks of queer shapes,—one a giant profile of a man's head in which all the features were perfect and the dashing foam suggested an old-fashioned frilled shirt. On one bold promontory of black rock was ruined Dunluce Castle,

which has played a part in Irish history and legend.

“The most tragic of all its tales,” Mrs. Pitt remarked, “is that of the fall of part of its walls in 1639. Eight servants were dashed over the precipice to the rocks below. But the tram is slowing down now; we must be almost there.”

Dinner was ready at the “Royal Hotel,” on the top of the cliff, and by the time they had finished it had grown so dark that the wonders of the Giant’s Causeway could not be explored until the following morning.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE FAR NORTH AND ITS LEGENDS

“ Ay, it’s a war-r-m day,” she replied, in broad Scotch, “ but that’s what I want for the rheumatics. Ah, ma’am, it’s two miles frae this well I live, and a sair lang way for sich an ould body! ” And the bent figure in the black shawl huddled closer over the Wishing Well and began a low plaintive croon.

“ Say, I’ll give you two more pennies for another drink out of your tin cup,” broke in John; “ I’m still thirsty, and besides I want to wish again,—something very special this time.”

Crippled though she was, the woman quickly leaned over the deep pool to dip a cup of water for John, and eagerly held out her hand for the promised coins. Even with numerous tourists, the old guardian of the well cannot make a large living.

They made their way over the uneven rocks, baking in the June sunlight. By dint of many frowns, sharp rebukes, and cold shoulders, they had finally rid themselves of the numberless guides who lurked near the hotel entrance and had followed the party all the way down to the

beach, each insisting that Mrs. Pitt hire him and be rowed about in his boat.

“ We are not going in any boat,” said Mrs. Pitt, in loud, distinct tones, “ and we do not need a guide. The water is very rough, and the rocks are far too numerous for my enjoyment. We can reach one or two of the caves from the land, and we want no guide to bore us with technical names of rock formations. We can see everything for ourselves. My word! they are insolent! Don’t answer them, John!” Down the steep path Mrs. Pitt trudged, skirts held high and head thrown back; her walking-stick clicked its iron point noisily upon the stones.

At last they were left alone to start off in the direction of the Causeway, which some enterprising company has bought and enclosed with a wire fence. Near the entrance is a little post-card and souvenir shop, in front of which sat another old woman, knitting briskly. She looked up at the visitors, her weak blue eyes blinking at the glare of the sun on the rocks and the glimmering water. On her scanty hair was a net cap, and, as Mrs. Pitt was about to speak to her, she rose and tried on a straw hat with a broad brim. The effect was absurd, and the woman well knew it.

“ I’ll not be keepin’ it on a meenit,” she laughed. “ I never wore one in my life. Even

when I was a lass I couldna thole one on my head. I wore a sunbonnet, though. The sun's hard on a body's eyes. I used to pick seaweed hereabouts, but it 'most put me eyes oot and I had to give it up."

They made a few purchases from the woman's stock; then they paid their sixpences and passed in through a wicket.

"Why do they all speak Scotch?" said Betty, stopping to tie her shoe.

"Because many of them are of Scotch descent. The Scotch settled in this part of Ireland in large numbers years ago, and their influence is still seen in the language and customs of the people. The MacKinnons, from the Isle of Skye, came to Ireland, and a clan of MacGregors; when the Graemes of the Debatable Land had made themselves too odious to be longer endured in Scotland, they migrated to Ireland, too. Hence the name of Groomsport, near Bangor on the east coast, which was originally Graemsport. Scotland is hardly more than twenty miles away, across the Irish Sea; from Ballycastle, near by, one can see its blue hills."

The Giant's Causeway is a long, low pier of rock, running out into the sea until the waves gradually cover it. At first glance the visitor is likely to be much disappointed, as was John.

"Say!" he exclaimed, in derision, "is this

the Giant's Causeway that we had in geography? Well, give me the rocks at Gloucester, U. S. A. You can't do geometry with them, but they're great to climb over and such a bully red. I call this pretty punk, eh, Phil? "

" Well, John," laughed Mrs. Pitt, " you will have to admit that you never saw rocks like these at Gloucester, or anywhere else—such a lot of pillars, all made up of joints or layers fitted closely together. They do remind one of geometrical figures."

" The one I'm standing on has six sides," Barbara discovered. " What's that? A hexagon? "

" Mine's seven-sided, I think," said Philip, stooping over for a careful examination.

" H'm! " said John; " mine's got nine. Now, what d'you think of that? Yes, Betty, I *did* count carefully."

" Mine has five, like Mrs. Pitt's," added his sister.

" Most of them are either five, six, or seven-sided," said Mrs. Pitt, " but a few have four, eight, or nine sides, and just one is a triangle. How many pillars do you suppose there are in all? About forty thousand! Fancy that! Of course the most curious feature is that of their different layers, each from about a foot to two feet deep. The cracks can be plainly seen, but the pieces fit so neatly that there's scarcely

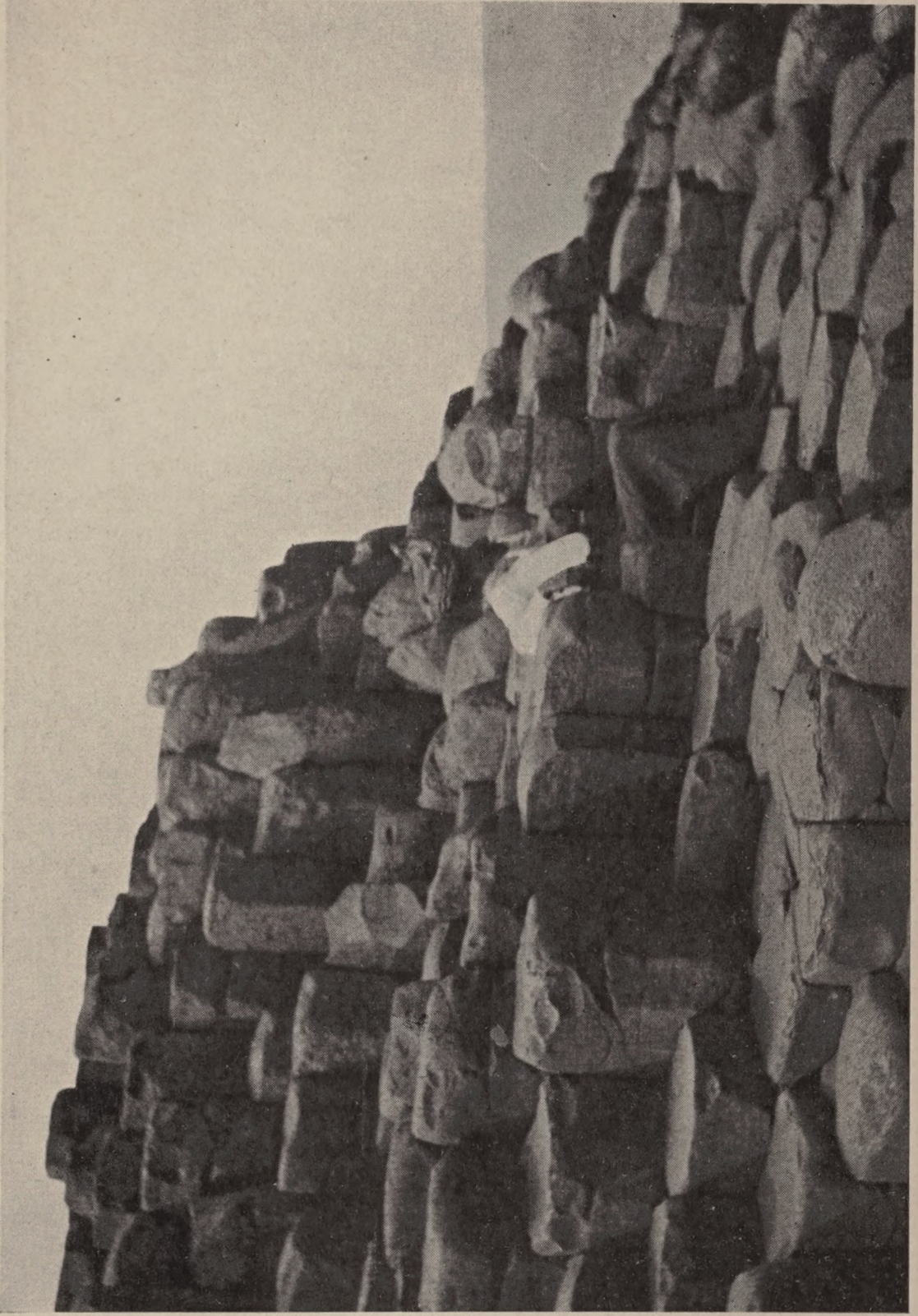
any space between. It's really no wonder that people come from all over the world to see these columns, so unlike most rocks."

They clambered over the slippery tops of the pillars until they came to a high pile of them, near the water's edge. Here there is a Wishing Chair, its seat, arms, and back formed by the polished pillars. Every one sits in this chair and silently makes his wish, feeling sure that it will come true.

"Aw! I can't think of any more wishes!" said John. "Used 'em all up over at the well. It's rot, anyway! Come on down to the water, Phil. It's great, the way it dashes up!"

By sitting in the Wishing Chair several minutes, her eyes tightly shut, Betty managed to think of another wish. Then, looking around her again, she said: "It is just as if a giant had built it, isn't it? It's a lot like those rocks at Fingal's Cave, where we were last summer. What's the story about this, Mrs. Pitt? John, come on back! There's going to be a story!"

"Well, Finn MacCool, champion of all Ireland, built the Causeway so that a boasting Scotch giant, who disliked swimming, could come over and fight him. Yes, John, the Causeway once reached across the Irish Sea, and ended at Fingal's Cave, so the stories tell us. The Scotch giant came over to Erin and was promptly overcome by the bold Finn.



EVERY ONE SITS IN THIS CHAIR AND SILENTLY MAKES HIS WISH.—*Page 242.*

“ Will you rest here a few minutes while I tell you another of Finn’s experiences? He once left his work at the Causeway and went home to spend a few days with his wife, Oonah, on the top of Knockmany Hill. Although Finn was doubtless a devoted husband, there was another reason why he went home this time. He had heard that the only giant in the world he was afraid of was coming to seek him at the Causeway. This giant, Cuchulain, had a thunderbolt, flattened by one blow of his fist, which he carried about with him to show to his enemies; and this was the reason why Finn was continually dodging Cuchulain. After two or three pleasant days spent at home, Finn told his wife of his fear that Cuchulain would follow him there, but Oonah seemed not at all troubled and made Finn promise to leave everything to her. Acting promptly, she borrowed several iron griddles from her neighbors and baked them into as many cakes, to be set before the strange giant.

“ When Cuchulain was seen approaching Knockmany Hill, on the following day, Oonah bundled Finn into the huge family cradle, exacted his promise not to speak, and went out to meet Cuchulain. They had some conversation at the door, Mrs. MacCool telling the stranger that her husband had gone to the Causeway to seek out a certain giant desirous

of putting his strength to the test. At this, Cuchulain declared himself to be the giant who had been wanting to meet Finn for the past year. Oonah then asked a favor of Cuchulain,—that he would undertake a little job which Finn had not found time for before his departure. To see how strong her husband's enemy was, Mrs. MacCool asked him to tear away a great crag of rock and bring her water from the spring underneath. Difficult as this was, Cuchulain succeeded in making a great cleft in the rock, since known as Lumford's Glen.

“After that, Cuchulain was invited inside and offered food,—the cakes especially prepared by Mrs. MacCool; but this was more than he was equal to,—the devouring of cakes with iron centers. Mrs. MacCool expressed her surprise at his not enjoying them, and, offering one to the baby in the cradle, remarked upon the way in which Finn's infant son enjoyed them.”

“Say!” interrupted John. “Did Finn eat it, iron and all?”

“Hush, John,” cried Betty. “Of course that one was a plain cake, without any iron in it.”

“At this Cuchulain secretly thanked fortune that he had escaped the father of such an infant, and soon he asked if he might look at the baby and feel its teeth. Mrs. MacCool natu-

rally assented, urging Cuchulain to put his hand far back into the baby's mouth, his best teeth being there. Quick as a flash, Finn bit off the middle finger of Cuchulain's hand, upon which, in some mysterious way, his strength depended. Then Finn jumped out of the cradle and killed Cuchulain in short order. And for this great victory he was beholden to his clever wife, Oonah."

When the story was finished, they all ran to watch a boat in which four visitors were being tossed about, evidently too uncomfortable to enjoy the places of interest which the guides were pointing out. It was an exciting moment when they attempted to land on the Causeway rocks. The waves were high, and the rowers had to choose just the right moment for coming close to shore. As soon as one leaped from the boat, a great wave came and carried it away. A second time it approached, and this time the men managed to land the two ladies, who were just able to scramble over the rocks in time to escape another wave.

"No, thank you!" exclaimed Betty, with emphasis. "I don't want to go out in a boat here. It would be much worse than that awful day at Killarney."

They explored one or two of the caves and climbed about among the rocks, some of the formations being so very like walls and towers

built with human hands, that it is not to be wondered at that the men on one of the ships of the Spanish Armada mistook them for turrets of Dunluce Castle. As a result, this ship ran ashore, only a few of the crew escaped, and two hundred and fifty Spanish sailors lie drowned in the bay, called Port-na-Spania.

Mrs. Pitt led the way towards the east, following a narrow path by the shore. Sometimes the great gray rocks were surrounded by bits of sandy soil in which grew hardy sea pinks, or a tuft or two of daisies; sometimes the rocks rose high in gigantic cliffs, taking many strange shapes. Mrs. Pitt showed them the Giant's Organ, the Giant's Loom, his Theater, Pulpit, Bagpipes, Ball-alley, Granny; in fact, everything an exacting giant could wish for.

It would take several days to inspect every feature of the Little Causeway, Middle Causeway, and Great Causeway. Towards noon our party felt tired and were glad to turn back towards the hotel.

"That's called 'Sheep Island,' " remarked Mrs. Pitt, "that little one you see, just there. No, look farther around to your right, Barbara. Just twelve sheep can be pastured on it, they say. If there are thirteen sheep, they all starve, and if there are only eleven, they die from over-eating. Not far away is Rathlin Island, 'like an Irish stockinge the toe of which

pointeth to the main lande ' ; but you will see that far better from Ballycastle."

Before luncheon Mrs. Pitt telephoned to Portrush for a motor-car, which drove up to the hotel door about two o'clock to take them to Ballycastle, by the beautiful coast road. The Irish sun had smiled upon them for many days; they had found it uncomfortably warm for walking, but a brisk breeze was now blowing as they sped along the high cliffs. The land was so deliciously fresh and green, and the water so blue far out and so white with spray near the shore! They left the motor-car once to watch a man race over the dangerous hanging-bridge which crosses a deep fissure at Carrick-a-rede (they all saw it except Betty, who could not bring herself to look); then they rode contentedly on to old Ballycastle. Sure enough, there lay Rathlin Island, directly opposite the town.

"It is supposed that it was on Rathlin that Robert Bruce watched the persevering spider and learned his valuable lesson," observed Mrs. Pitt. "Didn't you know that Bruce sought refuge on Rathlin when it was too dangerous for him in Scotland? No, Betty, I'm afraid we couldn't go out to the island. The sea is quite disgustingly rough, they say. Strange things happen on and near Rathlin. One man believed that he saw a company of armed men going

through their exercises on the beach; every morning a woman used to see a large fleet of ships sailing up the channel, between Rathlin and the mainland; and some believe that a green mystery island rises out of the sea every seven years. All these things disappear as suddenly as they appear, but the peasants have never held the fairies responsible for them. Oh, no, it is always the 'Grey Man of the North' who is blamed; no one has ever seen him, no one knows who or what he is, but many weird things has he brought about. Remind me, if you like, and this evening I'll read you a pretty poem about Rathlin."

So, after the two boys had tried their luck fishing in Ballycastle waters, when dinner was finished and it had grown cool enough to sit pleasantly near a fire, Mrs. Pitt read them Luke Aylmer Conolly's poem, "The Enchanted Island."

"To Rathlin's Isle I chanced to sail
When summer breezes softly blew,
And there I heard so sweet a tale
That oft I wished it could be true.

"They said, at eve, when rude winds sleep,
And hushed is ev'ry turbid swell,
A mermaid rises from the deep
And sweetly tunes her magic shell.

"And while she plays, rock, dell and cave,
In dying falls the sound retain,

As if some choral spirits gave
Their aid to swell her witching strain.

“Then summoned by that dulcet note,
Uprising to th’ admiring view,
A fairy island seems to float
With tints of many a gorgeous hue.

“And glittering fanes, and lofty towers,
All on this fairy isle are seen:
And waving trees, and shady bowers,
With more than mortal verdure green.

“And as it moves, the western sky
Glow with a thousand varying rays;
And the calm sea, tinged with each dye,
Seems like a golden flood of haze.

“They also say, if earth or stone
From verdant Erin’s hallowed land
Were on this magic island thrown,
Forever fixed it then would stand.

“But when for this some little boat
In silence ventures from the shore,
The mermaid sinks—hushed is the note—
The fairy isle is seen no more.’

“When I was standing on the cliff, just before dinner,” continued Mrs. Pitt musingly, “I almost fancied I heard the unearthly music of that mermaid; or perhaps it came from those four white swans, the enchanted children of Lir. A cruel stepmother, waving her fairy wand over them, changed them into this form and pronounced the following doom upon them: ‘Three

hundred years they are to spend on the waters of Lake Derryvaragh, three hundred on the Straits of Moyle, (off these rocks here, between Ireland and Scotland,) and three hundred on the Atlantic by Erris and Inishglory. After that, "when the woman of the South is mated with the man of the North," the enchantment is to have an end.' The four children, who were now swans, retained their speech; many people came to converse with them and hear them sing as they floated on the smooth waters of the lough. But the time came for them to go to the stormy Straits of Moyle, and finally, to the wide Atlantic, and here they suffered much, sometimes becoming separated so that the sister swan could not protect her little brothers any longer, her feathers being frozen. This is the song that Fionuala, the king's daughter, sang; it is given here in my book, and I'll read it to you:

"Cruel to us was Aoife
Who played her magic upon us,
And drove us out on the water—
Four wonderful snow-white swans.

"Our bath is the frothing brine,
Our bays the red rocks guard;
For mead at our father's table
We drink of the salt, blue sea.

"Three sons and a single daughter,
In clefts of the cold rocks dwelling,

The hard rocks, cruel to mortals—
We are full of keening to-night!’

“ When Princess Devca from the south was married to a Connacht chief named Lairgnen, the swans turned again into human beings; but they were withered, white-haired, sad old people and they wished only to die. This is the story of the unfortunate Children of Lir. Are you too sleepy to hear one more tale, associated with this northern part of Ireland? It’s about Deirdre (pronounced Deerdree), ‘ the Irish Helen,’ beautiful as was Helen of Troy, and it’s called the ‘ Fate of the Sons of Usna.’ But, no! I caught two of you yawning.”

“ But we’re not a bit sleepy, Mrs. Pitt—truly,” urged Betty. “ Please tell us.”

“ Very well. Among the lords of Ulster, there was one named Felim son of Dall, who invited the king and many heroes of the Red Branch to a great feast. (The Red Branch Knights, John, were selected members of a sort of ‘ heroic militia ’ which flourished in the first century; they went to the palace Emain, near Armagh, every year for training, and their greatest commander was Cuchulain. They sometimes acted as escort to the king.) While all were making merry over the roasted flesh, wheaten cakes, and Greek wine, a messenger came to tell Felim that a daughter had just been born to him. A Druid, being asked to read

the child's future in the stars, declared: 'The infant shall be fairest among the women of Erin, and shall wed a king, but because of her shall death and ruin come upon the Province of Ulster.' The warriors were greatly disturbed at this, and would have put the baby to death had not King Conor promised to avert this doom by himself marrying the child when she should be old enough. So the little Deirdre went, with her nurse, Levarcam, to live in a strong dun, or fort, in the center of a dense forest; and never was she to be permitted to see a young man. This was by order of King Conor.

"One day, when the time for the marriage of King Conor and Deirdre was drawing near, the girl looked out from her rath, and on the pure white snow, which had fallen in the night, she saw several drops of blood. As the girl stared, a raven came down and sipped the blood. Turning to Levarcam, the girl suddenly cried: 'Oh, nurse, such, and not like Conor, would be the man that I would love—his hair like the raven's wing, and his cheek the hue of blood, and his skin as white as snow.' Much astonished, the nurse said she had exactly described a member of King Conor's household, Naisi, son of Usna and knight of the Red Branch; and, after much entreating, the nurse agreed to bring him to see Deirdre. You can imagine that her

beauty won the young warrior, who, to save her from the old king, ran away with her and the nurse to Scotland; and Naisi's two brothers went, too. They managed to evade all pursuit by living in the woods of Glen Etive, where they contentedly hunted and fished.

“ All this time King Conor had said nothing but he had known, through his spies, all that had befallen Deirdre and her companions. Finally he sent over a messenger to beg them to return, promising that all would be forgiven. They were glad at the thought of returning to Erin in safety, all but Deirdre who foresaw evil and wished to stay on in Scotland. She remembered all the loved landmarks: the glen where they fished, that where they hunted the stag, another where they slept. ‘ Never,’ she said, ‘ would I quit Alba, were it not that Naisi sailed thence in his ship.’ And so they traveled back to Emain, where Deirdre and the Sons of Usna were lodged in the Red Branch House. Still King Conor had not seen Deirdre; he had only been told that in the wilds of Scotland she had lost all her beauty. Doubting this fact, Conor sent a messenger to the Red Branch House on purpose to see Deirdre, but the man found the place bolted and barred for the night. Not wishing to disappoint his master, he climbed upon a ladder and looked in through an upper window, and so he saw Naisi playing

chess with the most beautiful woman in the world. Unfortunately Naisi caught sight of this eavesdropper, whereupon he threw a chessman at him, putting out his eye. There followed much disaster, in which the same Druid played his part. All turned against Naisi and his brothers, who were finally ordered to be slain. A Norse captive at length was persuaded to grasp Naisi's magic sword, striking off the heads of the sons of Usna with one sweep. The king kept Deirdre with him for a year, during which time she never once smiled. In the end, she flung herself from a chariot, dashing her head against a rock. It is said that from her grave and from Naisi's two yew trees grew, and their branches became so intertwined over the church at Armagh that no one could force them apart. But in another version of the tale, the Sons of Usna met their fate at Rathlin Island, a cairn of stones being piled over their bodies and Deirdre's. And that is why I associate the legend with this northern coast, near Ballycastle. Now to bed—all of you! ”

CHAPTER NINETEEN

IN AND NEAR BELFAST

“ A toy shop! ” repeated Betty wonderingly.
“ What kind of a toy shop? ”

“ You’ll see in a few moments,” answered Mrs. Pitt, beginning to gather up various articles from the floor of the motor-car. “ This tiny village is an odd place to find such a thing, now, isn’t it? But I’m quite sure you’ll like it. There’s Cushendall’s Curfew Tower; it was once part of an old fort, but now they ring bells there several times during the day and curfew at nine o’clock every night.”

“ What’s that about ‘ Curfew shall not ring to-night ’? ”

“ Rings at nine, does it? ” cried John.
“ Well, I guess there isn’t much doing after that, so you turn in! ”

Cushendall is a quaint place in a valley between high mountains, with the sea lying blue below. It is so far from railways and tourist routes that few besides motorists and walkers find it. Its approach affords glorious scenery, and the little town itself has great charm. In the center is the vine-covered tower; the houses

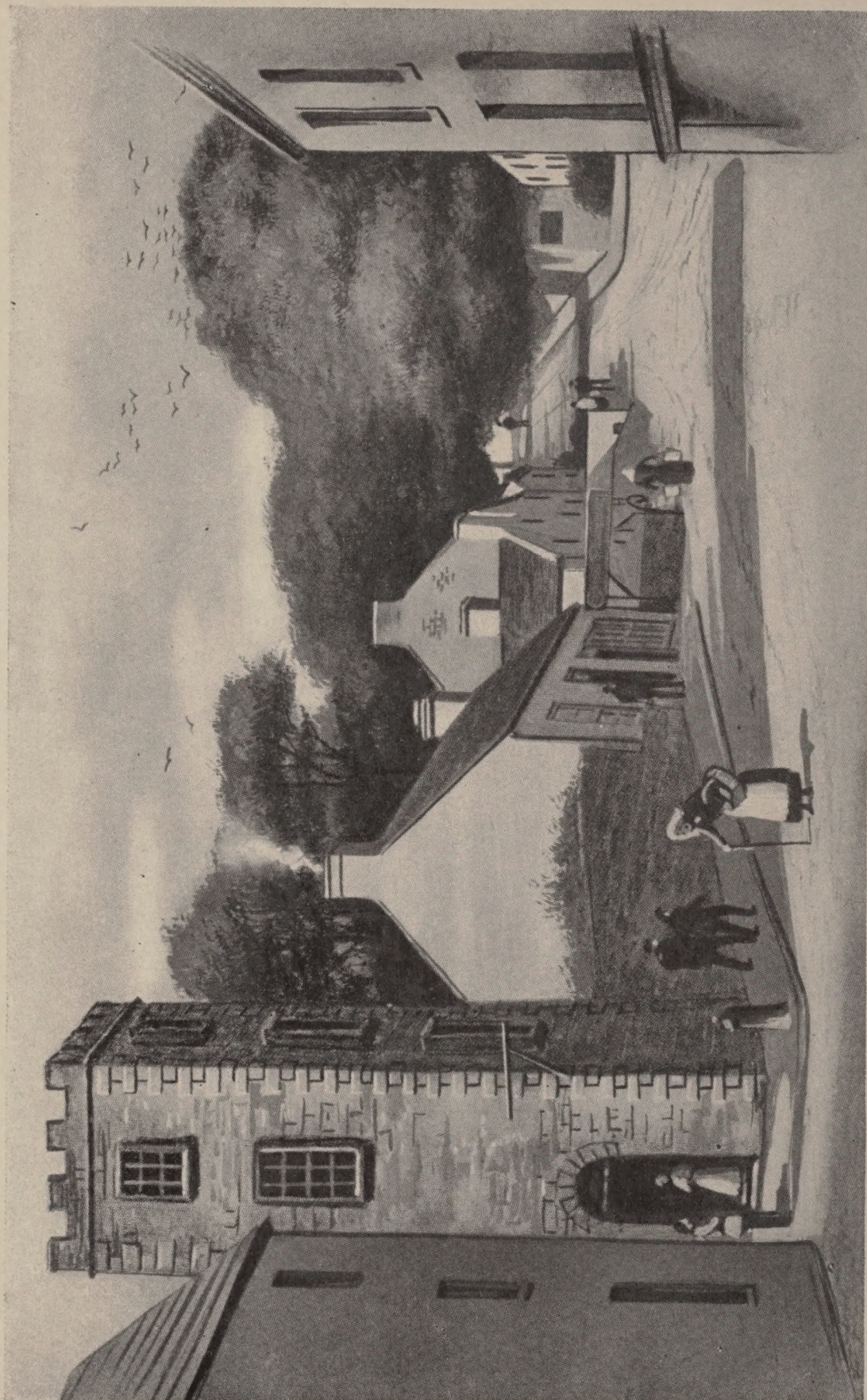
are small and old, huddling together for company and fronting directly on the street.

As for the neighborhood, every ruined castle, every oddly shaped rock, every valley and hill has its fascinating legend. Ossian is said to have lived and sung here, and to be buried on Slemish Mountain close by, where St. Patrick herded cattle and swine as a boy, earnestly praying for more light to carry on his great mission to his country. Ossian, son of Finn, lived until three hundred years after the other "Fianna" had died, spending the intervening time in "Tir-nan-og," where he married a king's daughter, Niam of the Golden Hair. When Ossian came back to earth, in the time of St. Patrick, he was broken-hearted to find all his friends gone. Perhaps he had cause to lament:

"No hero now where heroes hurled,—
Long this night the clouds delay—
No man like me, in all the world,
Alone with grief, and gray:

"Long this night the clouds delay—
I raise their grave cairn, stone on stone,
For Finn and Fianna passed away—
I, Ossian, left alone."

All accounts of the doings of Finn MacCool and his men were told St. Patrick by Ossian, so



THE LITTLE TOWN ITSELF HAS GREAT CHARMS.—Page 255.

we like to believe. These tales were all carefully set down, but so interesting did they prove that St. Patrick had two-thirds of them destroyed, fearing that the people would do nothing but listen to them.

But Betty's toy shop must not be forgotten. It was a freshly painted, new house on the outskirts of the town, with a gay awning overhanging its tiny show window. After one glance inside, they opened the door, setting a bell to tinkling merrily. Within, a Dublin woman greeted them pleasantly and hastened to show them her wares.

"Look at this adorable jaunting-car!" cried Betty, taking up a perfect model, made of oak. "It's exactly like the real ones; even the seats can be turned up, and there's the well where you put your handbags. I must have it to show to everybody at home! Nobody ever knows just how a real, live jaunting-car looks. I didn't! Oh, what's this one, with peat in it?"

This slide car was explained to them as the model of one in use in the mountains for carrying peat down into the valley. It has no wheels, the ends of the shafts dragging along the ground at the back, and the basket-like body being fastened to them. It is too delightfully primitive to be seen often in twentieth-century Ireland. There was also a low-backed car of the kind sometimes seen on the quays in Dub-

lin, and many pretty souvenirs made of bog oak and copper.

“The boys of the town make them, mostly in winter,” said the woman. “But now the greater number of them work in the iron mines, up Parkmore way. Perhaps you’ll have seen them bringing the ore down to Cushendall here, where it’s sent away in ships. What’s that? Does the young gentlemen wish for this cane, carved from a single piece of bog oak? Ah, it’s a fine specimen! And about that model Irish car—I should apologize for asking the young lady five and sixpence for it, but it took an invalid lad many weeks to carve it out.”

A large boxful of toys occupied a seat beside Betty when the party left Cushendall, by the old “long car” which traverses the coast to Larne. After the motoring of that morning, it seemed a strangely slow way of traveling. It was very warm in the sun and some of the party were forced to sit with their backs to the ocean; but they were reconciled to a few discomforts by their interest in this mode of Irish travel, and by the beauties of the country which its leisurely progress gave them an opportunity to enjoy. Because of a red sand found in the neighborhood, the soil has a terracotta tinge, contrasting with the deep blue of sea and sky. Late in the afternoon Larne was

reached, and they changed into the train for Belfast.

“ We’ll not pass through Antrim,” remarked Mrs. Pitt, “ and I am afraid I shall not have a chance to take you to see Shane’s Castle on broad Lough Neagh. It is the seat of the O’Neils, ancient kings of Ulster. I couldn’t begin to tell you their history; the family has had a long and wonderful one! There was Hugh O’Neil, first Earl of Tyrone, who wrote his signature, ‘ Myself O’Neil,’ and was at one time a favorite of Queen Elizabeth at her English court. Perhaps he was most distinguished of his family. You’ve noticed the Red Hand of Ulster, cognizance of the O’Neils? One sees it a good deal, here in the north. Tradition accounts for the red hand by this gruesome story: In an early conquest of Ireland, it was decreed that whoever touched the land first should possess it. An O’Neil, wishing to make sure of his rights, stood up in the boat, cut off his right hand with an ax, and threw it ashore.”

When they emerged from the station at Belfast, they almost lost Barbara in the crowd, and Mrs. Pitt had to shout a warning to John, who was just in front of a starting motor-car, so unused were they to a big city. In despair, Mrs. Pitt bundled them all into a cab, and they drove through electric-lighted streets to the hotel.

Although Belfast was one of the "good towns and strongholds" destroyed by Edward Bruce in 1315, it now gives one no idea of its great age. Even when Mr. and Mrs. Hall wrote their famous book of Irish travel, in the early nineteenth century, they found Belfast a "clean Manchester." It is remarkably clean, considering its many factories, and it presents a prosperous air of bustle and business not met with in any other Irish city. Except for the double-decked trams, the view from the Royal Avenue Hotel differs little from that in any small American city; and even the noise seems American. Rosemary Street, running along one side of the hotel, is far from as pastoral as its name. Every few moments, even during the night, trucks or station omnibuses rumble by; an endless procession of trams clang their bells and motor-cars honk and toot.

"I don't like it very well," said Betty, standing by her window on their first morning. "It isn't a bit Irish. Why, I don't see a single pig or donkey, and the old women don't wear shawls."

John was the first one to go down to breakfast, and when the others joined him he was full of important news.

"I say, Philip! There's a big White Star liner to be launched this morning. Isn't that bully? We can go, can't we, Mrs. Pitt? It's

at Queen's Island, the waiter said. I'll get a paper and we'll find out more."

The Belfast trams, their upper stories partially glassed in, are usually painted bright red, and are so covered with gay signs that a stranger is hard pressed to know where they are going. The natives identify them by number, but all a visitor's eyes light upon is a huge sign of "Nestlé's Milk," or of some breakfast food, or soap.

"These all seem to be going to 'Van Houten's Cocoa,'" Betty laughed, glancing at several trams bearing these words in huge white letters on a deep blue ground extending the length of one side.

"This next one's jammed like all the rest!" cried John. "Everybody's going! Let's get aboard!"

They managed to climb on and to find standing-room, but the tram was crowded as is seldom permitted in Great Britain; people even perched on the steps leading to the upper deck. Upon arrival at Queen's Island, John attempted to jump off the front platform, where the step is raised purposely to prevent this disobedience of the company's rule. The scandalized motorman remonstrated, but the Yankee boy was too quick for him; and away they hurried with the crowd.

"If I had known about this a day or two

earlier, I could have had some tickets," Mrs. Pitt said, when they had reached the end of a long pier. "We'll not be able to see much from here. Can you jump up on that pile of rope, Betty, you and Barbara?"

Thousands of workingmen and women stood in the hot sun to watch the launching. Broad Scotch was being spoken on all sides, at which Mrs. Pitt showed her delight. The crowd was very orderly, waiting patiently for some time with only a distant glimpse of the ship's great hull to repay them. Small boys were perched upon almost every possible vantage point, but John discovered one unused lamp-post and "shinned" up it. From this position he kept the others informed of every movement on the big ship.

"They're going to fire the rockets now," he cried, at last. "There they go! Now for the signal!"

A shot was fired and then, slowly, majestically, the ship began to move. Every one stood on tiptoe, breathless and thrilled. Gradually it gained speed in slipping down its "ways" until, smoothly and gently, it struck the water, bounding forward into the stream. There was a moment of stillness; then the crowd burst into cheers.

"How funny that it didn't splash!" was all that Betty said, as they walked away.

“ Fifteen thousand tons! ” muttered John. “ That’s some boat! How’d you like to sail on her, Phil? ”

Later that day the party visited the York Street Flax Spinning Company’s linen mills, the largest in the world. Here both spinning and weaving are done, but bleaching is carried on by big companies outside the city of Belfast, where long strips of linen can be seen stretched on the green grass. Throughout the building the heat is intense and the noise of machinery makes it impossible for a guide to make explanations en route. Therefore, the strange processes in different rooms seemed rather mysterious.

They saw flax being combed, thousands and thousands of times, through teeth of different sizes. There are queer, little silky bundles of flax, with a twist at the bottom to hold the strands together. After the combing, it goes over a giant roller which has previously been passed across a sort of thick mucilage. The flax is strengthened by running it through boiling water. Some women spend all their time tying the fine threads together, after the machines have been stopped and reversed to release broken ends. The most interesting room was the one in which designs were woven into tablecloths. By a strange, hinged cardboard arrangement, hanging from the top of the loom,

the threads are moved back and forth, making letters and patterns.

Betty stood spellbound before one big loom where the words, "White Star Steamship Company," were gradually appearing on a huge tablecloth.

"Perhaps it's for the boat they launched this morning," she said, smiling up at Mrs. Pitt, who shook her head; she could not hear what Betty said.

Most of the workers in the mills are women. Some of them appear to be in good health. Obviously they are the ones who have not been long at work there, for others are pallid and their eyes look bad. Because of the heat, their sleeves are rolled up and their collars turned in. Young girls and boys run errands and replace the spools.

"How young can the girls enter the mills?" Mrs. Pitt asked their guide, as the party was leaving.

"We employ them at twelve years of age, but until they are fourteen they must go every other day to the school kept by the company. If you care to cross the street, madam, you can see the laundry. In that annex the hemming of handkerchiefs and all machine embroidery are done, too."

While they were at luncheon that day, Mrs. Pitt said: "Although you find Belfast too mod-

ern and not Irish enough to suit you, children, I want you to understand what a remarkable place it is and what a fine thing it would be for Ireland to have more such cities. It is a wonderful example of rapid and substantial growth. In 1720 all the houses on one of Belfast's main streets were thatched with straw. It was not until the early years of the nineteenth century that the place began to grow, and it has kept on growing ever since. I believe that the American Revolution, cutting off commerce between our country and yours, is supposed to have given the first stimulus to the trade of Belfast. The linen trade is an ancient one, however, for a yellow linen shirt was the characteristic costume of the native Irish. 'Erin's yellow vesture' was seen even as late as Queen Elizabeth's reign, when certain chieftains of northern Ireland wore it at the English court."

"Our cook lived in Ireland once," volunteered Betty; "and she taught me a riddle about the flax and how it looks when it's growing. This was it:

"There's a garden that I ken,
Full of little gentlemen,
Little caps of blue they wear,
And green ribbons very fair.'"

During their stay at Belfast they went out to Carrickfergus, where they saw a fine old cas-

tle with an enormous tower and thick walls; but, alas! mounted knights in armor no longer clatter about its courtyard. It is now used as an arsenal, and, although red-coated soldiers are to be seen and two guns are in position on the outer wall, it does not look very formidable. At the end of a long pier, near the castle, is the rock on which King William of England is said to have landed. From the waters of Belfast Lough, John Paul Jones sailed in command of his American vessel, the *Ranger*. When Belfast was only a small garrison town, it was "dependent" on Carrickfergus, at that time as prosperous as it is now sleepy. It contains much of interest, including St. Nicholas' church, dating from 1164; more time might have been spent there had Mrs. Pitt not been traveling with restless young people, who were growing just a wee bit tired of churches.

At Betty's request, they hunted down the Giant's Ring, far out in Belfast's suburbs, a huge circle of earth, slightly broken here and there, with an ancient cromlech in the center of its basin-like inclosure. They took tram rides in many directions and found pretty suburban residences, set in trees and flowers.

Their stay in Belfast would have been pleasanter had it not been for the effort of trying to sleep amid the confusion of Rosemary Street, and the noisy drilling of the Orangemen.

Looking down from his window on the first evening, John had cried: "Who in thunder are those fellows? And what are they giving us?"

"They are getting ready for their great celebration on the twelfth of July, the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne.

"It was in May, 1795, that the Orange societies originated and were named for William of Orange, just when there was a general Irish uprising against English authority. Knowing what was in progress in Ireland, the French were planning an attack upon the Irish coast, and the Catholics of Ulster (the Defenders), anticipating French control and wishing the connection between Ireland and England to be abolished, took the oath to be 'faithful to the United Nations of France and Ireland.' The Protestants, who still wished to keep up relations with England, formed the various Orange societies. Previously they had been known as 'Peep o' Day Boys,' and for this reason: It was then contrary to law for a Catholic to keep firearms, so, obviously, they were only to be obtained by stealth or force. The Catholics, therefore, went about the country, seizing arms, and the Protestants organized small parties who endeavored to prevent their getting them. From the early morning hours in which this warfare was most frequently carried on, the

Protestants became known as the 'Peep o' Day Boys.' It was a kind of religious war, you see. There were battles fought—the most famous being the Battle of the Diamond—and there were outrages and bloodshed. For about fifty years, then, the different lodges of the 'Orange Institutions' flourished, and many powerful Protestants joined them. The Orange Society had developed an elaborate system, with passwords and secret forms and ceremonies, when it was dissolved in 1836 by Act of Parliament. Orangemen have always paid high honor to William III., Prince of Orange. That is why present-day Orangemen still celebrate the Battle of the Boyne anniversary, with songs and cheers and parades, with fife and drum."

CHAPTER TWENTY

GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH ST. PATRICK

“ MARBLE streets! It’s like the Bible, isn’t it? ”

“ Well, we are told that the heavenly streets are paved with gold and precious stones, Betty; but it is quite extraordinary enough to find a city on earth paved with marble, like Armagh, isn’t it? Some of the older houses are made of marble, too. No, John, come this way. That’s the new Catholic cathedral on that hill. My word! it is warm! ”

St. Patrick founded one of his earliest churches, with an adjoining school, at Armagh, probably about the year 455, and ever since then it has been the ecclesiastical center of Ireland. In 1552 it was decided that the Archbishop of Dublin might call himself “ Primate of Ireland,” while he of Armagh remained “ Primate of All Ireland.” But there are few relics of antiquity in the present-day city, proud though its history has been; the narrow marble streets are now dirty and crowded, and there are all the ordinary inns, shops, markets, and humble dwellings. Even the modern-look-

ing edifice on the hill-top scarcely recalls the glories which Armagh once knew.

“ Oh, do come inside this nice yard with the shade trees. At least that looks comfortable and cool and old.”

Mrs. Pitt entered the cathedral gate, turning her back resolutely upon a row of distressingly gay, new houses of red brick.

They dropped upon the grass to rest after the climb up a steep hill, and then some one remembered that Brian Boru is believed to be buried in the vicinity of that church, in an unmarked grave.

“ You slept in his bed at Waterford, didn't you, Betty? ” giggled Barbara.

“ Yes,” said Betty reminiscently. “ Poor Brian! They killed him at the door of his tent so horribly, they might at least have remembered the place where they buried him! ”

“ Of course, Armagh Cathedral, like many others we have seen, is an old Catholic church, converted to the use of the Irish Protestant Church,” said Mrs. Pitt. “ It has been rebuilt a great many times. The Danes destroyed the city and its cathedral, which also seems to have been burnt often,—seventeen times, I believe. Several primates have restored it, the last having been Lord John George Beresford, who left the cathedral as we now see it. His sister was the *Lady Anne* of Eleanor Alexan-

der's book, 'Lady Anne's Walk.' Part of the archbishop's demesne was her garden and there she dreamed over her past or future, or listened to the chatter of old 'Tummus.' None of you are old enough to enjoy her, but some day you, at least, will find her delightful, Betty."

As they left the shady cathedral yard and went down the steps leading to the street below, Mrs. Pitt reminded them that Emain Macha, one of the royal palaces of prehistoric times, had stood upon a rath only two miles from Armagh.

"It was built by Macha of the Golden Hair, wife of the king of Ulster, and for six hundred years it was the residence of the Ulster kings. Here flourished the Red Branch Knights of the first century and the Fena, or Fianna, of the third century, that band of heroes established by Cormac MacArt to protect the throne. It was there that Deirdre was lodged, too, in the house of the Red Branch Knights. But Emania is only a barren hill now, like Tara; its glories belong to Ireland's splendid past." Once again Mrs. Pitt caught herself regretting prosaic progress.

On the way back to Belfast there was a thunder storm and Mrs. Pitt, seeing that Betty was not fond of thunder and lightning, offered to tell a story from her seemingly unlimited stock.

“ It’s about the origin of Cuchulain’s name, one of the leaders of the Fianna and the mightiest of all Erin’s heroes,” she began. “ Do any of you know the story? No? Well, Cuchulain’s name was not always Cuchulain; he was called Setanta until one eventful day during his stay at King Conor’s court, where he had been sent to be taught with the sons of other princes and chieftains. On one occasion King Conor and his nobles were going to a feast which was to be given in the dun of a rich smith, named Cullan. Setanta was enjoying a game of hurley so much that, when the time came for the cavalcade to start, he begged to be permitted to follow later. The royal party arrived about night-fall, and soon made merry over the feast which Cullan had set before them; meanwhile, the smith let loose his great dog to guard the entrance, a dog so fierce and powerful that he was regarded as sufficient protection against any foe. Amid the music and laughter, no one remembered Setanta until the hound was heard baying fiercely outside the door. The howls that told of the combat suddenly ceased as the nobles rushed forth to save the boy. Stopping short in amazement, they saw him calmly standing with his foot on the dead hound’s neck. Full of admiration for his bravery and strength, they raised him to their shoulders and bore him in triumph to the feast. Although Cullan,

their host, applauded with the rest, he was very sorrowful over the loss of his faithful dog. When Setanta learned this, he said:

“ ‘ Give me a whelp of that hound, oh, Cullan, and I will train him to be all to you that his sire was. And until then give me shield and spear and I will myself guard your house; never hound guarded it better than I will.’ ”

“ All the knights cheered this generous offer, and, then and there, they changed his name from Setanta to Cuchulain, the Hound of Cullan. There now, Betty, the storm is quite over.” But Betty had been too absorbed in the hero of Emain Macha to fear the lightning.

From trains in the north of Ireland one sees orchards and fields of flax, factories, and busy towns. It is a far more cheerful country than the south. They particularly noticed the influence of Scotch progressiveness and thrift on their way to Downpatrick.

“ Our last trip in Ireland! ” sighed Betty. “ O dear! Think how soon we’ll be back at Gloucester, John,—just as if nothing had happened! ”

But John’s regrets were fewer. After all, one could not spend all one’s time sightseeing, he argued, muttering something about the fellows at home and baseball. It would be good to get a bat in his hands again. A captain ought to be loyal to his team.

“By the way, Mrs. Pitt,” he inquired, “what was that game, hurley, that Cuchulain played?”

“A very ancient game, John, something like your field hockey. It is played with a carved wooden stick and a ball which, I have read, used to bear a silver plate inscribed with the motto, ‘Fair play is good play.’ No doubt that would amuse you Americans, who, of course, play fair without a warning to do so. The players—sometimes there are a great many of them—divide into two sides, standing with their hurleys crossed. Some one tosses up the ball and then the players raise their sticks, trying to hit it as it comes down. There are two goals, and boys to guard them. You know the rest, I’m quite sure. I’m told one may see hurley played in the parks of New York, on a Sunday.”

“It sounds pretty tame to a baseball fan like me,” was John’s comment.

Then they reached Downpatrick station and started to walk up to the cathedral, coats over their arms, for June was unusually warm that year.

“Anybody can have an arm of coats,” suggested John, relieving Mrs. Pitt of hers. “Isn’t that as good as a coat of arms?”

Nobody laughed, until Philip said, “Why, no, of course it isn’t the same thing,” when Betty

gave an appreciative chuckle, and Mrs. Pitt added, " Oh, you are slow, Philip! "

In the shade of some big, fine trees, standing on a hill-top, as the Armagh cathedral does, is that of Downpatrick, also one of St. Patrick's early foundations. Granting that it was founded by the saint in 440, the church has a clearly defined record of fifteen centuries.

" " In Down three saints one grave do fill,
Brigid, Patrick, and Columb-kille; " "

chanted Mrs. Pitt, as they went up the gravel path towards a huge, rough boulder placed there a few years ago to commemorate, if not to mark, the grave of the great St. Patrick. On it is cut an early Celtic cross, and the word " Patric " in Celtic characters.

" Then they aren't even sure that it is St. Patrick's grave? " inquired Betty. " O dear! They don't seem to be sure of anything, do they? "

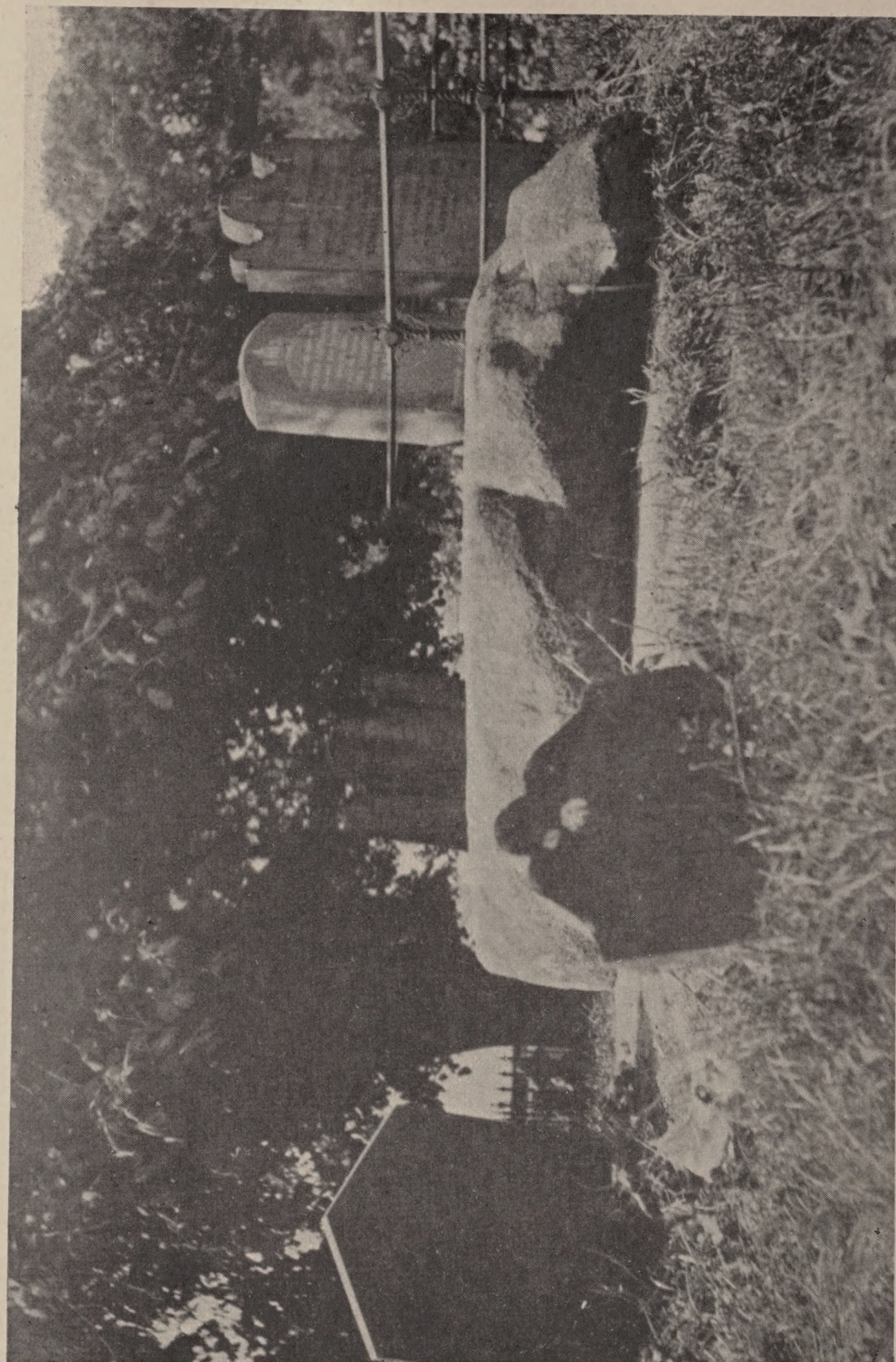
" They can't be sure about the exact spot, you see, but many ancient records say that the saint was buried at Downpatrick, in or near the cathedral. It is interesting, isn't it, that St. Columba's body should have been brought from Iona and buried in the same grave? And the ' Annals of the Four Masters ' say that in 525, ' on the 1st of February, St. Brigid died, and was interred in Dunn, in the same tomb

with St. Patrick, with great honor and veneration.' "

It was cool and comfortable in the churchyard, where a pleasant breeze was blowing and birds were singing overhead. Between the branches of the trees they had glimpses of the pretty valley below. Betty found a clump of tiny shamrocks, in the very shadow of St. Patrick's tomb. Altogether it seemed the proper place to linger and talk about Ireland's favorite saint.

"Of course, he wasn't really Irish," observed Barbara. "He was born in England, wasn't he, Mother?"

"No, Barbara, he was not. The English cannot claim all the saints! No one knows, or ever will know surely, where St. Patrick was born; but most authorities believe it was either near Dumbarton, Scotland, or in the west of Gaul, part of France. When he was a boy of about sixteen, he was kidnaped and brought to Ireland, where he worked as a slave for six years. As you know, his master, Milchu, sent him to herd sheep and swine on Slemish Mountain, not far from Cushendall. In his own words he tells how he forgot to be lonesome by turning his mind to God. 'I was daily employed tending flocks; and I prayed frequently during the day, and the love of God was more and more enkindled in my heart, my fear and faith were in-



BETTY FOUND A CLUMP OF TINY SHAMROCK IN THE VERY SHADOW OF ST. PATRICK'S TOMB.—Page 276.

creased, and my spirit was stirred; so much so that in a single day, I poured out my prayers a hundred times, and nearly as often in the night. Nay, even in the woods and mountains I remained, and rose before the dawn to my prayer, in frost and snow and rain; neither did I suffer any injury from it, nor did I yield to any slothfulness, such as I now experience; for the spirit of the Lord was fervent within me.' Yes, Betty, it's all written here in Joyce's 'Concise History of Ireland.' You may read it later, and much more, if you like."

After pausing while the cathedral bell rang for afternoon service, Mrs. Pitt went on:

"At the end of six hard years among the pagans, St. Patrick made his escape and went to the Continent, studying under two great teachers, St. Martin of Tours and St. Germain at Auxerre. But he always remembered his mission to the pagan Irish, and everything he did was but a preparation for that work. He once had a strange dream in which he seemed to hear the Irish calling to him,—'we entreat thee, oh, holy youth, to come and still walk amongst us.' Hearing that Palladius, a bishop whom the Pope had sent to convert the Irish, had lately died, Patrick felt more and more his call to go to that country. He was consecrated bishop in Gaul, and straightway set sail for Ireland with his companions. They landed near Wicklow,

but the natives drove them away from the land, so they sailed farther north, at length coming ashore here in County Down. The chief was at first hostile, but was calmed by the saint's appearance; the holy men were received hospitably and they made many converts. Dichó, the native chief, turned to Christianity and, as there was no church, he gave St. Patrick a sabhall (saul), or barn, in which to worship. Ever since the place has been known as Saul; it is very near Downpatrick and is famous as the site of St. Patrick's first church.

“ You all know a little about how St. Patrick went over the country, making converts and building churches everywhere. Palladius had perhaps introduced Christianity into Ireland, but it was St. Patrick who, by his own holy, useful life, established the faith permanently. Many of the places we have visited are associated with incidents in the saint's life; we know that he was at Tara and Cashel, and that he spent Lent on the top of Croagh Patrick. I wish I had time to tell you some of the beautiful stories of his life—how he converted King Loghaire and his daughters at Tara, for instance. In the ancient ‘ Book of Armagh,’ there is such a pretty version of it. I must read you just a little, as it is given here in my favorite ‘ Lady Anne's Walk.’ The angry scene between St. Patrick on one side, and the Druids

and their king on the other, was at an end; the Christians, clothed in white, were resting near a clear well of water when Ethne the Fair, and Feidelen the Ruddy, King Loghaire's daughters, came there to bathe.

“ Ethne said:

“ ‘ Tell us about the new God.

“ ‘ Has he sons and daughters?

“ ‘ Has he gold and silver?

“ ‘ Is he beautiful?

“ ‘ Are his daughters dear and bounteous to the sons of the world?

“ ‘ How is he found?

“ ‘ Is it in youth?

“ ‘ Is it in age?

“ ‘ Teach us most diligently how we may believe in the heavenly king.’

“ And we can well imagine what answers the saint made, and how the king's daughters became Christians, being baptized in the well. St. Patrick's personality must in itself have been wonderful, for it appealed to children. There was a youth named Benen, or Benignus, in whose father's house the saint was once entertained during a sudden storm. The boy became so attached to St. Patrick that he insisted upon following him as his disciple; years afterwards Benignus succeeded his master as Archbishop of Armagh.

“ But to finish this long story, St. Patrick

died at Saul, the scene of his first conversion, probably about 465. Upon hearing the news, many journeyed here to do honor to the dead saint; the ceremonies lasted twelve days and twelve nights, and so many torches blazed that the night became as bright as the day. Then, according to some versions of the story, they hitched two oxen to the saint's coffin and, when the animals stopped on the hill at Downpatrick, there the saint was buried. And that's why we are here to-day, talking about St. Patrick and reverencing his memory."

It was almost time for the Belfast train to leave, so they collected their belongings and retraced their steps down the hill.

"I shall always love the shamrock now," said Betty gently, "because of St. Patrick, you know. I used to laugh sometimes when people wore green, but now I'm going to wear it myself all I can."

The next day, when the party crossed from Ireland to England, it was noticed that John wore a brilliant green tie, while Betty had pinned to her dress the sprig of shamrock from St. Patrick's grave.

THE END

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